# Pre-service Teachers' Evolving Perceptions and Responses to Teaching: Changing Career to Find Meaning and Purpose


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B App Science (Hons), Grad Dip Sec Ed (Science)


Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy


University of Tasmania


May 2018

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# Abstract

Commencing pre-service teachers enter initial teacher education programs with diverse preconceptions, understandings, beliefs and values about the teaching profession. A complex mix of personal, professional and contextual factors shape their perceptions about the challenges and rewards associated with teaching. These, in turn, influence their development and preparation for the classroom. Contemporary framings of initial teacher education emphasise the importance of interrupting and disrupting pre-service teachers' preconceptions while helping them to develop more informed perspectives through critical engagement with theory and the practical realities of classroom teaching. Pre-service teachers' motivations and aspirations are essential to this process, as they provide the enthusiasm and momentum for reconceptualising perceptions about themselves, the profession, and the lived experience of classroom practitioners.

This study investigated the effects of new theoretical knowledge and practical applications of this knowledge on pre-service teachers' perceived preparedness for classroom teaching. Their changing perceptions were investigated to examine evolving responses to theoretical and practical components of their initial teacher education program, from commencement to completion. This study utilised a modified case study employing a mixed method design involving the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and participants' journal entries. These data revealed parallels between Tasmanian pre-service teachers and other cohorts represented in the literature. Through the contextual lens of the participants' demographic and preferential profiles, a variety of extrinsic, intrinsic and altruistic motivators were identified within the deeply personal and philosophical drivers for creating change in their own lives and careers. Equally, a change in emphasis, from the pragmatic considerations of the nature of teachers' work to an altruistic view of the contributions to be made through teaching was

evident in the narratives of the participants. Additionally, the opportunity to embody and enact lifelong learning was exposed as a particularly motivating aspect of the teaching profession. Significantly, further analysis emphasised that these pre-service teachers approaching transition into the profession had embarked on a process of continual recalibration of themselves in order to align with the priorities of the profession. As such, they described the quality of their initial teacher preparation in relation to the influence that their learning contexts had had on them, and how these had created the impetus for change. For some, this presented a particular level of challenge, highlighting perceptions about disconnections between stakeholders working within initial teacher preparation and those supporting beginning teaching.

This study is both unique and significant in that it contributes to the limited body of knowledge about pre-service teachers within the Tasmanian context, emphasising parallels with those found within other Australian contexts. This study also highlights the unique contextual factors shaping initial teacher preparation in Tasmania and captures the discrete evolution of participants' perceptions from commencement to program completion. These insights will be of particular interest to educational researchers, teacher educators, school leaders, and system administrators interested in contributing to the strength and capacity of initial teacher preparation and that of the future Tasmanian and the wider national teaching workforce.

# Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge the many people who encouraged, supported and guided my personal and professional growth as I embarked upon this research.

To the pre-service teachers who welcomed me into their professional lives. Without your honesty, openness and willingness to share your experience, I could not have continued mine. I am immensely grateful for your contribution.

To my supervisors Emeritus Professor John Williamson and Dr Chad Morrison, who knew the road I had to travel. They didn't just point me in the right direction, but walked with me, sometimes in front and sometimes behind. Their gentle communication of the highest expectations they had for me has enhanced both my personal and professional life. Their deep understanding of our profession, the academic world and their willingness to teach me how to contribute to it, has changed my life, my family culture and my global outlook. I cannot express my gratitude for the gift they have given me.

To my co-supervisor Dr Christine Gardner, your support, good humour and friendship encouraged me to keep going. You allowed me to test all my questions on you and helped me to shape them into intelligent ones before I asked them of John and Chad. You encouraged me to travel, to share my research and be proud of my achievements. I have been so fortunate to have had your mentorship.

To my friend and colleague Dr Robyn Reaburn for your gentle support and expert tuition in statistical analysis. You always made time to answer my questions and to help me understand the story my data was telling me.

My thanks to my co-supervisor Dr Marion Myhill, and the many colleagues and professionals who have taken an interest in my thesis, given me the opportunity to share with them my passion for education and given me the benefit of their own experience.

To my Mum and Dad, thank you for instilling in me a belief that nothing was beyond my reach. You ensured that I was only ever limited by my own efforts and that I had a responsibility to lead by example. Although my Dad isn't here to celebrate this milestone with me, I know that he, Mum and my beautiful children, William, Sophie, and Olivia, are excited and proud of my achievement.

To my closest friends, you kept me moving forward both personally and professionally throughout this process. The supportive encouragement, understanding, good advice, technical assistance and reassurance kept me inching toward the finish line.

Thank you.

# Glossary of terms, acronyms and abbreviations

| Term | Explanation |
|---|---|
| B. Teach | Bachelor of Teaching |
| Beginning teacher | A graduate of an initial teacher education program, within the first three years of teaching. |
| Colleague teacher | A qualified and registered practising teacher assigned to supervise, mentor and assess the pre-service teacher whilst undertaking Professional Experience in a school placement. |
| College | A secondary school catering for years 11 and 12. |
| CT | Colleague teacher. |
| E-pool | A centrally managed database of available teachers for relief or fixed-term contract work. |
| Graduate teacher | A graduate of an initial teacher education program, within the first three years of teaching. |
| IT | Information Technology |
| ICT | Information Communications Technology |
| ITE | Initial Teacher Education |
| ITP | Initial Teacher Preparation |
| LAT | Limited Authority to Teach. A provisional permission for final year pre-service teachers to be employed in specific schools |

| | |
|---|---|
| | where no fully registered teacher can be sourced. |
| LOTE | Languages Other Than English |
| MDT | Materials, Design & Technology |
| M. Teach | Master of Teaching |
| Pre-service teacher | An enrolled student in an Education degree, not yet qualified to teach. |
| Professional Experience | A period of school placement undertaken under the supervision of a colleague teacher, contributing to the requirements of program completion. |
| Relief teaching | Casual teacher employed short-term and at short notice to replace a teacher when absent. |
| Secondary school | A school that caters for years 7 to 10. Some secondary schools include years 11 and 12. |
| SOSE | Studies of Society and Environment. |
| Supply teaching | See relief teaching. |
| TAFE | Technical and Further Education. Tertiary education institution specialising in vocational and trade training. |
| TCE | Tasmanian Certificate of Education. |
| The Arts | The Australian Curriculum area incorporating the five Arts subjects of Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music and Visual Arts. |
| TRB | Teachers Registration Board of Tasmania. |

| | |
|---|---|
| PRT | Permanent Replacement Teacher. PRT status is obtained after two years of continuous contracts. The PRT is employed as a permanent teacher but does not have a fixed school of employment. |

| **Data specific term** | **Explanation** |
|---|---|
| During-PE | During Professional Experience interview. An interview conducted whilst Professional Experience was being undertaken. |
| Post-PE | Post-Professional Experience interview. An interview conducted after the completion of Professional Experience. |
| Pre-PE | Pre-Professional Experience interview. An interview conducted prior to the commencement of any Professional Experience. |
| **Example:** | |
| Olivia, Pre-PE1, First-year | Olivia, a first-year pre-service teacher, was interviewed prior to her first Professional Experience placement. |
| Ben, Post-PE2, Second-year | Ben, a second-year pre-service teacher, was interviewed after his Professional Experience 1 and 2 placements. |
| Participant 4, Final questionnaire | A participant, who remains anonymous, has responded in the open-ended section of the final questionnaire. |

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# Chapter 1

# Introduction

## 1.1 The beginning teaching experience

The words 'teaching' or 'teacher' evoke particular memories and images for most people (Ayers, 2001) whether they consider teaching as a career or not. With ever increasing demands placed upon the teaching profession, attracting and retaining quality teachers is a challenge for Australia (Buchanan et al., 2013) and many industrialised countries (Hayes, 2004). Understanding initial motivations to teach (Day & Gu, 2014) and how these are influenced by the realities of early classroom teaching (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Aspfors & Bondas, 2013) emphasise opportunities to enhance initial teacher education (ITE) (Hong, 2010) and assist in the development of resilient 'classroom ready' graduate teachers (B. Johnson & Down, 2013; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010).

Recent research that employed a variety of theoretical frameworks, methodologies and teacher samples has focused on a range of related issues including, the development of teacher professional identity (Bullough & Gitlin, 2001; Morrison, 2013b) teachers' work lives (Williamson & Poppleton, 2004), beginning teacher retention (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Plunkett & Dyson, 2011) and early career teacher resilience (B. Johnson & Down, 2013; Mansfield, Beltman, Broadley, & Weatherby-Fell, 2016).

The quality of Australia's teaching workforce is of tremendous value to the community and the impact of high-quality teachers has never been more promoted (Hattie, 2003a). The relationship between the quality of the teaching workforce and issues of preparation, recruitment, retention and development are clear (Davies et al., 2016; Hayes, 2004; Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2012). Consequently, understanding the profile, experiences and perspectives of the teaching workforce is paramount (Al-Hassan, 2012; du Plessis, Carroll, & Gillies, 2014; Lang, 2001). The most recent data available on the profile of the Tasmanian teaching workforce at the time of the study highlights that in 281 primary and secondary schools across Tasmania 82,797 students (Government 61,976: Non-Government 20,821) were educated (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008) by 9,712 registered teachers (Suitor, 2009). Currently, 11,353 teachers are registered in Tasmania (Mannering, 2016).

Recent Australian studies have enhanced our understanding of teachers and their motivations for entering the profession (Richardson & Watt, 2006; (J. White & Moss, 2003), however no studies have examined the motivations of teachers preparing for the Tasmanian context. No Tasmanian study has followed a sample of career-change pre-service teachers from initial enrolment through to the conclusion of their ITE program. This means that there is also a lack of evidence-based research exploring the motivations, preconceptions and aspirations of Tasmanian pre-service teachers as they progress towards career entry as professional educators. The focus of this study is therefore to contribute to the knowledge of pre-service teachers, their early classroom challenges and successes, and their perceived needs. In doing so alleviate some of the paucity of understanding of the unique Tasmanian context and through comparison with contemporary literature, situate this understanding in a broader context.

The overarching research aim of this study was to explore Tasmanian career-change pre-service teachers' motivations for choosing to teach, their preconceptions, understandings, and beliefs regarding the teaching profession,

held at the commencement of their ITE program. A further aim was to investigate the effect of theoretical knowledge and practical applications on the pre-service teachers' perceived preparedness for classroom teaching. Additionally, the study examined shifts in perception regarding the teaching profession and the contextual, personal and professional issues that may have contributed to such change throughout transition from pre-service to graduate teacher.

The study was informed by international research conducted in Australia (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Ingvarson, 2001, 2005, 2007; Ingvarson, Elliott, Kleinhenz, & McKenzie, 2006; Lang, 2001), the United States of America (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010; Ingersoll et al., 2012; Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2016; S. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003), the United Kingdom (Smithers & Robinson, 2003) and western European countries (Kaldi, 2009; König & Rothland, 2012). These studies focus attention on issues relating to recruiting, preparing and retaining quality teachers while also identifying experiences of beginning teachers that may determine the direction and longevity of their teaching careers (Andrews, Gilbert, & Martin, 2006; Plunkett & Dyson, 2010, 2011). Existing literature (Richardson & Watt, 2006; (J. White & Moss, 2003) and anecdotal reports emphasise a number of inextricably linked personal, professional and contextual influences that shape early career teacher experience, leading to a change of perception about the profession and their emerging professional identity (Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2011; Bullough, Young, & Draper, 2004). Much of this literature highlighted the need to understand those who choose to teach in order to understand why they choose to teach (Abbott-Chapman, 1999, 2005; Abbott-Chapman, Hughes, & Williamson, 2001). This study investigates individual understandings and perceptions held by career-change pre-service and graduate teachers about the teaching profession, their motivations, and professional preferences and considers what collective understandings emerge. It utilises the existing literature to inform the interpretation of the pre-service teacher experiences as they consider what are the rewarding and the challenging aspects of the profession, and their understanding of required competencies for successful classroom

practice. The relevance of the findings of this study will be evaluated in light of previous research and particularly studies that consider the characteristics of pre-service, and specifically career-change pre-service teachers, within the contemporary Australian context.

## 1.2 Impetus for research

This investigation was prompted by the researcher's observations of the experiences and challenges of Tasmanian pre-service and beginning teachers. These observations were made during the course of almost two decades of teaching in Tasmanian schools and raised concerns which were reinforced by the experiences of mentoring and supporting these teachers. The challenges that these emerging professionals faced and their responses emphasised what was already known in the literature related to beginning teachers. The paucity of literature that examined the pre-service teacher, career-change pre-service teacher and ITE experience provided little guidance in preparing them for the challenges ahead. Research highlights that beginning teachers in the Western world, having invested their time, finances and effort into their ITE, resign from their chosen profession within three to five years at a rate of 25% to 40% (Berry, Petrin, Gravelle, & Farmer, 2011; Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Smithers & Robinson, 2003). This statistic manifests as a high turnover of teachers in schools, the consequences of which impact student learning, educational outcomes and school culture (Angelle, 2006; OECD, 2005), as well as producing disillusioned educators (R. Gardner, 2010).

## 1.3 Initial perceptions of being a classroom teacher

As all pre-service teachers have attended school as a student, they have observed and engaged with teachers and formed a range of perceptions of the teaching profession based on their own experiences (Lortie, 1975). They have developed expectations around the required competencies and personal attributes for being a teacher, and the skills, knowledge and understandings required to fulfil the role. The dominant conceptualisation of themselves as people suitable for teaching

(Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2011; Priyadharshini & Robinson-Pant, 2003) and the realisation that the nature of teachers' work suited them as a viable career option, leading them to enrol in an ITE program and subsequently to embark upon a new career pathway. Regardless of whether or not the decision to teach was because of, or in spite of their own experiences, these perceptions were the beginning of the development of their professional identity as teachers (Allen, Park Rogers, & Borowski, 2016; Pietsch & Williamson, 2005; Sutherland, Howard, & Markauskaite, 2006; J. White & Moss, 2003; Zembylas, 2003).

## 1.4 The influence of initial teacher education on perceptions of being a classroom teacher

The integration of theory and practice, through course work and the practical application within Professional Experience, provide pre-service teachers with lived insights into their chosen profession and, most importantly, an opportunity to not just imagine themselves as the teacher in the class, but to embody and enact the teaching role (Bullough & Gitlin, 2001; Bullough & Young, 2002; Bullough et al., 2004; J. White & Moss, 2003). It is this intensive period of practice-based learning that affirms or challenges their decision to be a professional educator and is critical for pre-service teachers' development of knowledge and skills required by effective teachers (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG), 2014a, 2014b). This experience builds upon or reshapes initial perceptions about teaching and about themselves as teachers. Identifying and explaining the key elements that cause shifts in their thinking will allow the researcher to contribute to the design, delivery and refinement of ITE programs that enhance the preparedness of pre-service teachers for the realities of Professional Experience and early career teaching (Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2006; Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008).

## 1.5 Changing perceptions of the teaching role

Consistent with global trends, many teachers resign from the profession within the first three to five years (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Smithers & Robinson, 2003).

High early career teacher attrition has considerable impact on the strength and capacity of the teaching workforce as a whole (du Plessis, Carroll, & Gillies, 2017), including high turnover within hard-to-staff schools, loss of expertise in curriculum specialisations, and loss of effective and efficient teaching expertise (du Plessis et al., 2014; Ee-gyeong, 2011). With many Australian teachers approaching retirement age, determined to be over 30% in the year of this study (McKenzie, Kos, Walker, Hong, & Owen, 2008), the implications for Australia and Tasmania are substantial. Reported unfilled teacher vacancies across Australia impact the secondary sector more than primary classrooms and this is compounded when available teachers are employed outside of their expertise (Beswick, Fraser, & Crowley, 2016; Caldis, 2017). The collection of accurate data regarding teacher vacancies is difficult to obtain as schools and school systems employ a number of strategies to manage their workforce needs. These strategies include increasing class sizes, employing less qualified teachers or employing teachers outside of their field of specialisation, and, reducing curriculum offerings to students (Caldis, 2017; McKenzie et al., 2008) to mask the realities and needs of the employment setting.

The success and the retention of graduate teachers is paramount to the teaching profession nationwide (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; McKenzie et al., 2008). Research highlights personal (S. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Richardson, Gough & Vitlin, 2001; Richardson & Watt, 2005, 2006), professional (Boe et al., 2006; A. Peralta, 2005) and contextual (du Plessis et al., 2014; Mercieca, 2017; Pietsch & Williamson, 2004, 2005, 2009) issues, as well as the changing nature of teachers' work (Easthope & Easthope, 2000, 2007; Mayer, 2006; Mayer et al., 2013) are influential to the early career trajectories of success or attrition of graduate teachers. More nuanced insights are required in order to understand how these factors individually and collectively impact on graduate teachers' trajectories and how these insights can be used to best prepare pre-service teachers for the challenges of the teaching profession.

## 1.6 Rewarding and challenging aspects of the teaching

The decision to teach, particularly to relinquish an established employment pathway or career to enter the teaching profession, is based on the perceived benefits and rewards of the role and the importance of those factors in the life of the pre-service teacher (Laming & Horne, 2013). The perceived professional, personal and the intrinsic rewards of educating students and nurturing children, feature heavily in the Australian and international literature relating to motivations for entering teaching (Bullough, Mortensen, & Mayes, 2006; Marble, 2012; Richardson & Watt, 2006; Watt & Richardson, 2007). Equally, the perceived rewards of teaching are counterbalanced by the challenges experienced by teachers (Easthope & Easthope, 2000). Both the rewards and challenges are key considerations for individuals choosing to teach but also in terms of them staying in the profession (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Long et al., 2012).

## 1.7 Development of professional identity

The dominant beliefs pre-service teachers hold of themselves as teachers are not only long-held and firmly embedded, they change and develop as Professional Experience placements reshape their perceptions of what it is to be a teacher (Bullough, 2005; Sutherland et al., 2006). Professional experiences affirm some perceptions and reinforce ideals about teachers and teaching. For others, classroom experiences confront and erode their beliefs. These disparities reflect the variability, unexpected challenges, unforeseen difficulties of the role and unanticipated personal demands of teaching (Watt & Richardson, 2007). There are elements of the role that although considered as potential challenges, may be found to be far more difficult than expected. In the same way, the rewards of the profession may be far greater than imagined, or not enough to counterbalance the trials faced. For the pre-service teacher, all Professional Experience, whether experienced positively or negatively, creates new professional understandings.

Currently, the Australian government recognises that a key driver to student success is the recruitment and preparation of quality teachers (Department of Education and Training (DET), 2015). This sustains a focus on rigorous selection for entry to ITE, the importance of Professional Experience within ITE programs and the implementation of strong quality assurance and assessment of early career teachers. Within this broad focus on quality and rigour, there is limited attention payed to how pre-service and early career teachers will be nurtured or supported as they develop in their role, beyond a push for national research into workforce planning (DET, 2015). Further insights about this transition from pre-service to graduate teacher will allow stakeholders in ITE to better nurture, mentor and support these individuals as they develop their professional practice and construct professional identities (Bullough, 2005; Carter & Francis, 2001; P. Hudson, 2013; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010; Long et al., 2012; Martinez, 2004; Morrison, 2013b).

## 1.8 Structuring the research topic

This study examined the changing perceptions of pre-service teachers as they transitioned toward becoming a graduate teacher. This was achieved by exploring the demographic profile, motivations to teach and teaching preferences of a cohort of pre-service teachers. It was important to determine initial preconceptions of teaching, their own professional aspirations and explore the influence of theoretical knowledge and professional practice on these early ideas. Capturing any changing perceptions and priorities that emerged from the pre-service teachers lived experience as they progressed through their ITE program, became an important inclusion in the structure of the research topic. Equally important was the documentation of how the pre-service teachers made meaning of the personal, professional and contextual contributors for change. Attention was also directed to the preconceived image a pre-service teacher holds of themselves as it is critical to their professional motivations, the perception of the success of their professional experiences and their thoughts on education and how they see themselves in the role of teacher (Beltman, Glass,

Dinham, Chalk, & Nguyen, 2015). This study compares the beliefs of the pre-service teachers at commencement of their ITE program, during their ITE program and at the conclusion of their studies. Importantly, this comparative data emphasises the nature of change in perception that takes place with the integration of theory and practice and as pre-service teachers develop their knowledge and understanding of the profession.

## 1.9 The topic scope

This modified longitudinal mixed-methods study examined the changing views of being a teacher at commencement of and after the completion of one ITE program. The effects of increased theoretical knowledge and of practical applications of this knowledge on pre-service teachers' preparedness for classroom teaching were examined. Shifts in perception regarding the teaching profession throughout the duration of the program were captured and the contextual, personal and professional factors contributing to these changes were interrogated. Furthermore, the motivations and aspirations of the participants were captured to provide depth and appreciation of why these pre-service teachers chose to teach (Richardson & Watt, 2006). This research was intended to identify the key elements of pre-service teachers' initial understanding of teachers' work and life and their developing understandings of themselves in the process.

## 1.10 Research Approach

The modified longitudinal study design of this investigation necessitated a three-pronged triangulation mixed-methods approach to data collection (Creswell, 2008) utilising a combination of both quantitative and qualitative strategies (Burns, 2000). A variety of data collection instruments were utilised and these instruments included: questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, classroom observations and a weekly journal, which allowed for validation of the participant's responses (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996). The data collection approach

was built on the premise that the pre-service teachers would provide point-in-time insight into their lived experiences as they were embedded in the teacher preparation process, as opposed to an external objective observation by the researcher (Creswell, 2008; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). The selection of this research approach stemmed from the intention to examine the personal experience through mixed-methods means. The results were intended to inform and deepen our understanding of, and contribute to, the current vacuum in the body of knowledge related to the pre-service experience and initial teacher education specific to the Tasmanian context.

## 1.11 Research design

Data collection produced corresponding sets of qualitative and quantitative data that required the use of methods of analyses within and between data sets (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). Focus on demographics, perceptions, and beliefs were identified by the researcher as key elements when viewing the pre-service teacher holistically and as such data were sought in these areas.

The mixed-methods approach utilised in this study was developed to capture data at key specified times throughout the two-year B. Teach program:

**Stage 1:** Upon commencement of studies,
**Stage 2:** During or after a period of Professional Experience, and
**Stage 3:** At the completion of the B. Teach program.

The initial questionnaire sought demographic information about the respondents as well as their perceptions and beliefs associated with a range of teaching-related issues, using both Likert scales and open-ended response sections. This initial questionnaire, administered to all of the enrolled B. Teach students present on the first formal day of their program, resulted in 42 completed sets of data. Enrolled second-year students of the same program were also invited to

participate, resulting in a further 39 participants. These additional data allowed for a more significant participant cohort as well as the comparison of cohort data.

## 1.12 Significance of the study

This study is both unique and significant in that it contributes to the current limited body of existing knowledge that captures development from pre-service to graduate teacher. It specifically addresses the absence of research related to this phase of development within the Tasmanian context. It exposes some of the difficulties encountered by teachers in their early classroom experiences and provides insights on how best to prepare pre-service teachers for these challenges. The study broadens the literature on pre-service and graduate teacher demographic and preferential profiles, understandings and beliefs regarding the profession. It also explores the motivations and aspirations pre-service teachers have for themselves in the profession and provides a more refined view of the professional context in which teaching and specifically beginning teaching in Tasmania, is experienced.

The recommendations of the study are intended to assist ITE providers in the design of their programs, employers and their understanding of beginning teachers, and the graduate teachers themselves in relation to their understandings of the profession and their emerging professional identities.

## 1.13 Structure and layout of the thesis

The thesis comprises this introductory chapter and an additional seven chapters; Literature review (Chapter 2), Methodology (Chapter 3), Results – Research Questions 1 and 2 (Chapter 4), Results – Research Question 3 (Chapter 5), Results – Research Question 4 (Chapter 6), Discussion (Chapter 7) and implications and recommendations (Chapter 8).

A critical review of the current and past literature relevant to the scope of the thesis is presented in Chapter 2. The complexity of the emerging themes within

this study, and therefore the extensive nature of the literature review required a highly organised structure. The review of the literature explores the current understanding of pre-service and beginning teachers, their perceptions of being a classroom teacher, the required competencies, the practice of teaching, personal aspirations, professional motivations and personal preferences. Literature that examines the themes regarding the realities of teaching, both rewarding and challenging aspects of the profession, the professional community and how beginning teachers see themselves as part of it, is reviewed. Chapter 2 further considers the emerging professional identity of beginning teachers by examining the current scholarly publications pertaining to preconceptions of the teacher's role, metaphors of self as a teacher and the personal context of teaching. An examination of professional identity and the merging of personal and professional lives of teacher's, and how that understanding relates to the research questions of this study, is included within the review of the literature in Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology of the study. The research approach and the research design are presented in greater detail as are the variety of quantitative and qualitative data gathering strategies and instruments employed within this study. It provides comprehensive information on the data collection instruments used and the potential for triangulation of the data obtained. Discussion of how the corresponding sets of qualitative and quantitative data and methods that allowed for analysis within and between data sets is provided. In keeping with the longitudinal nature of the study, the collection of data and the subsequent concurrent organisation and analysis of the data are outlined and clarified.

The results for research questions 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this study are presented in Chapters 4 to 6. Demographic data collected pertaining to the participants enrolled in the B. Teach program in both the first and second year of study are addressed in Chapter 4 with a presentation of data on the gender, age,

qualifications and teaching preferences of the participants. Chapter 4 submits data on the understandings, perceptions and beliefs of both the first and second-year cohorts before delving into any apparent changes exposed by the ITE experience in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 examines the motivations to teach and the personal, professional or contextual issues that may have contributed to any changing perceptions.

The closing chapters, Chapter 7 and 8, discusses in detail the findings and conclusions of the study in relation to the extant literature. Presentation of these chapters relates directly to the research questions as it outlines the implications for educational research, professional practice and educational policy that impact graduate teachers, and offers recommendations so that a better understanding of the pre-service teacher and their transition into the profession may be obtained.

## 1.14 Summary

This chapter has provided background context for the study and to provide an overview of the research topic, the research questions, the significance of the study and the structure and layout of the thesis. It has placed the research in the context of the dominant themes within the literature and emphasised the geographical setting of Tasmania, Australia as influential to the study. This chapter has outlined the scope of the research topic and provided a basis for providing an elaboration on the literature in the next chapter.

# Chapter 2

# Literature Review

## 2.1 Introduction

Pre-service teachers approach the transition to teaching with pre-conceptions about the profession as a result of their own schooling and their ongoing observations of educators (Lortie, 1975; Van Hook, 2002). They use professional experiences and theoretical insights gained within initial teacher education (ITE) programs to test their ideas and to hone these as they commence this period of rapid personal and professional growth and change (Morrison, 2013a, 2013b). This process influences their emerging priorities and shapes decision-making about where to direct their attention throughout the transition to teaching. Their developing theoretical and disciplinary knowledge bases are engaged throughout and act to reinforce understandings of themselves, their personal and professional contexts and teaching generally. The products of this process are evident in the professional identity work of both pre-service and beginning/graduate teachers, and in the ways, their beliefs, knowledge and practice develop.

This chapter presents current and seminal literature on the disparate but interconnected fields of research related to the beginning teaching experience spanning the past 30 years. Using the overarching aims and central research questions of this study, this review highlights common pre-conceptions, understandings and beliefs held by pre-service and graduate teachers. It

identifies and emphasises the unique context of career-change pre-service and graduate teachers. The review examines the available literature on the effect of theoretical knowledge and professional experiences on pre-service teacher's self-determined preparedness for classroom teaching. Further, this review emphasises how shifts in perception, knowledge and practice impact on pre-service teachers transitions into the teaching profession. Influential personal, professional and contextual factors are discussed through the literature alongside factors relating to issues that emerge through and as a result of ITE programs.

## 2.2 Defining career-change pre-service teachers

'Second-career' (Tigchelaar, Brouwer, & Korthagen, 2008; Troesch & Bauer, 2017), 'mature-age' (Bauer, Thomas, & Sim, 2017; Etherington, 2011; Troesch & Bauer, 2017) and 'change-of-career people' (Anthony & Ord, 2008) are terms that identify people who enter teaching after having previous careers in other sectors of employment and/or training. The variety of descriptors used is indicative of the complex and multifaceted lives of these individuals and also the gravity of their decisions to alter their career and life paths. These pre-service teachers come into teaching with rich life experiences and intentions to get a great deal back from teaching.

'Career-change' teacher (Laming & Horne, 2013; Watters & Diezmann, 2015; Williams & Forgasz, 2009) has been used throughout this thesis to reflect the myriad of convoluted pathways taken prior to entering ITE. Despite this diversity, they are united by a need for significant change in the orientation of their lives. They acknowledge and act upon these feelings, of being pushed or pulled towards teaching.

The available literature related to 'career-change' teachers communicates the significance of a career change, a change in career and life. This high-stakes undertaking by individuals is an attempt to find their place in teaching; a financial, professional, personal and philosophical fit with the profession.

Subsequently, there is a range of motivations and personal inducements for embarking on ITE. One of which is the overwhelming drive to contribute to something bigger than oneself while feeling a sense of personal validation (Anthony & Ord, 2008). These drivers indicate the construction of a psychological contract within the minds of these career-changers connecting themselves with their new profession and all that this entails.

## 2.3 A dynamic contemporary context

The sustained political appetite for improved student outcomes (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training & Youth Affairs, 2008) has driven discussion related to better-quality teachers as the solution for resolving a multitude of societal afflictions while realising national aspirations (Day, 2017; Goe & Stickler, 2008; Hattie, 2003b; Ingvarson, 2002; Ingvarson et al., 2006; Skourdoumbis, 2017).

Initial teacher education, including teacher recruitment processes, are currently under review in Australia (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], 2017c). This review has been driven by the recommendations of the TEMAG through its review of ITE (2014a). Perceived deficits in policy and practice in ITE led to a number of recommendations to improve graduate teacher quality and subsequently student outcomes. Some of these recommendations have been incorporated into new ITE accreditation requirements and processes (AITSL, 2015).

The assessment and monitoring of pre-service teacher dispositions is a contentious debate within teacher education in the United States. The idea that pre-emptive judgement of applicants to ITE may exclude those who may develop into exceptional teachers, is challenged (Welch, Pitts, Tenini, Kuenlen, & Wood, 2010). Regardless, the value of selecting suitable candidates to teaching has been recognised through the recommendations made by TEMAG (2014a). They call for the consideration of personal attributes (or non-academic criteria) and suitability

for the teaching profession, alongside the academic achievement, skills and aptitude of entrants as a means of implementing more rigorous teacher selection processes.

Across Australia in 2018, mandated changes to teacher selection processes for entry into ITE programs as well as successful completion of a Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) prior to graduation are required (AITSL, 2015). These changes, which focus attention on who should be permitted to engage with ITE and their final demonstration of teacher competency at program completion, reflects the commitment of the Australian Government to a reform agenda which emphasises the classroom readiness of graduate teachers (Department of Education & Training, 2015).

Researchers such as Pinnegar, Mangelson, Reed, and Groves (2011) inform us that personal attributes such as confidence and optimism, as well as positive emotions (Gu & Day, 2007, 2013), are important elements of disposition for graduate teachers that support and sustain them in the classroom environment. Regardless, the motivations for career-changers to enter teaching and the current priorities for assessing their suitability for it introduces a range of new complexities.

## 2.4 Career-changers as a significant contributor to the teaching workforce

In Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012; S. Hudson & Millwater, 2009; Hutchison, 2012; Shine, 2015) career-change teachers, with their extensive range of backgrounds, skills and experiences, make a significant contribution to the diversity of the teaching profession (Richardson & Watt, 2002; Williams & Forgasz, 2009). Perhaps as a result of perceived professional maturity, there is an assumption that career-change graduate teachers obtain teaching competency more rapidly than those emerging from undergraduate ITE programs (Brouwer, 2007; Tigchelaar et al., 2008). However,

they are equally exposed to the challenges of teaching as other graduates who have taken a more direct pathway in ITE. Additional complexities exist for the career-change teachers in that levels of professional efficacy they may have enjoyed in other careers is now absent. This realignment of their confidence leads to difficulties in processing their beliefs about teaching, their preconceived notions of the nature of teaching and learning and the necessity to learn new pedagogical strategies (Richardson & Watt, 2006). Their lived experience of ITE can be profoundly affected by their motivations, expectations and outcomes (Walters, 2000). This is particularly evident in the data that communicates the individual level of risk that has been taken to enter into teaching, the temporary or ongoing financial cost of changing careers and how this is perceived by others. The pre-service teachers recognise the risk and how the success or failure of their choices are scrutinised by those around them. Although the decision to teach has been carefully assessed by the pre-service teacher prior to enrolment, they acknowledge through the data a perception that teachers are not highly valued by society.

## 2.5 Initial literature scan

Online electronic data bases (Informa, Proquest and Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)), as well as the available literature of scholarly databases and libraries associated with the University of Tasmania, were searched for relevant articles and texts.

General terms such as 'beginning teacher' and 'graduate teacher' yielded a broad and extensive collection of writings. Previous research undertaken within the field focused attention on the profession and issues relating to teacher recruitment and retention, initial teacher education and the associated issue of integration of theory and practice (R. Gardner, 2010; Gu & Day, 2007, 2013; Hayes, 2004; Ingersoll et al., 2012, 2016; S. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Long et al., 2012; Mayer, 2006; Millward, Turner, & van der Linden, 2012; Rhodes, Neville, & Allan, 2004). Other research explored the complexity and demands of the profession and the

personal dimensions of teachers; rewards, challenges, motivations or professional identity (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Allen et al., 2016; Avraamidou, 2014; Beltman et al., 2015; Bullough, 2005; Cattley, 2007; Easthope & Easthope, 2000; Hong, 2010; Morrison, 2013a, 2013b; Pietsch & Williamson, 2005; Zembylas, 2003). In contrast, preliminary searches for the term 'pre-service' teacher produced limited results. This scarcity of research related to pre-service teaching alerted the researcher to the importance of this study and its role in expanding understandings of early experiences of those undertaking ITE.

The initial scan of the literature revealed a pattern of change within educational research with increasing emphasis on themes like curriculum, assessment and graduate teacher standards (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Arnold, 2015; Bullough et al., 2004; Cady, Meier, & Lubinski, 2006; Ingvarson et al., 2006; Kenny, 2010; Labaree, 2000). It also exposed limited data relating to the socio-cultural context of Tasmania and the experiences of Tasmanian pre-service teachers (Abbott-Chapman, 1999; Abbott-Chapman, Hughes, & Wyld, 1991; Easthope & Easthope, 2007; C. Gardner & Williamson, 2007). This provoked a tightly focused and extensive review of the available scholarly literature on issues relating to Tasmanian pre-service teacher recruitment and retention of early career teachers, the development of teacher professional identity in this context and issues specific to teacher practice within this island context.

## 2.6 Structure

### 2.6.1 Organisation of themes

The intricate and interconnected nature of themes informing this study means that they interrelate and overlap rather than follow a linear progression. This required an extensive review of the literature and an organisational structure to highlight the relationships that exist between these themes. This process resulted in the three overarching themes of *Pre-service and graduate teachers*, *Professional motivations and influences* and *Professional teaching contexts*, each with

subthemes. Figures and tables are used to identify these themes and to organise the literature associated with each. See Figure 1.

### 2.6.2 Organisation of literature

The extensive base of literature utilised in this chapter required organisation into tables that relate to the relevant themes. Tables are used to avoid lengthy in-text citations and to ease readability. Specific and key literature are presented in-text where appropriate.

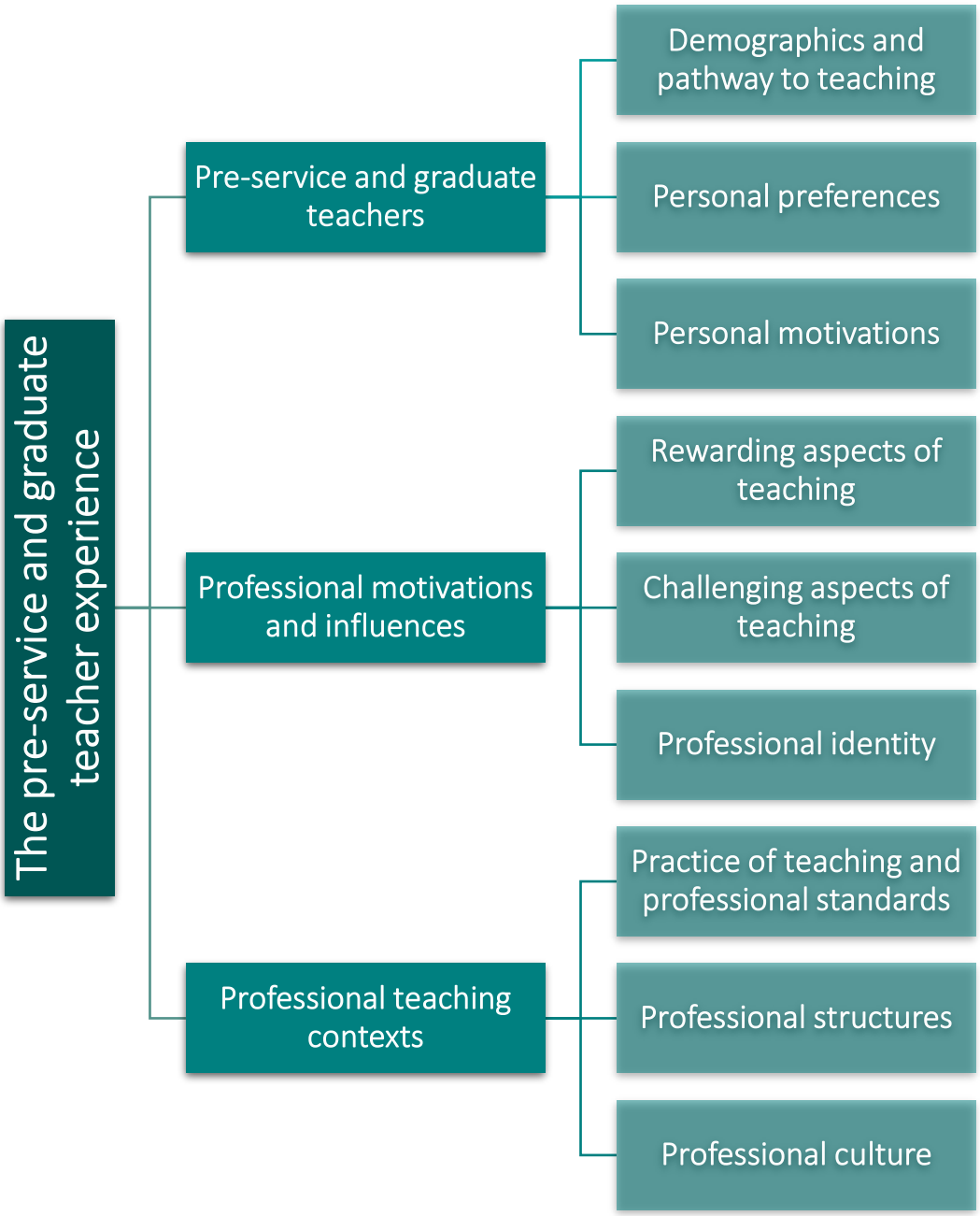



*Figure 1*. Hierarchy of literature review themes.

This chapter offers a review of the past and current literature in relation to areas relevant to the research aims and questions of this study. See Table 1.

Table 1.

*Extended hierarchy of overarching theme, sub-theme and literature topics.*

| Overarching theme | Sub-theme | Literature topic |
|---|---|---|
| **Pre-service /graduate teachers** | Demographics and pathway to teaching | Gender, The mature age beginning teacher, Qualifications for teachers, Pathway to ITE, Recruitment and retention, Initial Teacher Education |
| | Personal preferences | Teaching locations, Year level specialisations, Subject specialisations, School systems |
| | Personal motivations | Choosing to teach, Deterrents to teaching, Previous careers |
| **Professional motivations & influences** | Rewarding aspects of teaching | Intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic rewards |
| | Challenging aspects of teaching | Personal challenges and professional challenges |
| | Professional identity | Personal attributes, Perception of the teacher's role, Metaphor for teaching, The importance of teachers |
| **Professional teaching contexts** | Practice of teaching and required competencies | Relationship between theory and practice, Skills, knowledge and understanding, Professional performance / Teacher quality, Professional Experience, Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting, The complexity of teaching |
| | Professional structures | Role of the colleague teacher, Workplace environment, Mentoring and staff support |
| | Professional culture | Student, Staff and Parent relationships, Professional development, Teacher as a role model, Public perception of teaching |

## 2.7 Pre-service/graduate teachers

This section explores the first of three overarching themes of the literature review. See Table 2.

Table 2.

*Overarching themes of the literature review – The pre-service and graduate teacher.*

| Pre-service and graduate teachers | Professional motivations and influences | Professional teaching contexts |
|---|---|---|
| **Demographics and pathway to teaching** | Rewarding aspects of teaching | Practice of teaching and required competencies |
| **Personal preferences** | Challenging aspects of teaching | Professional structures |
| **Personal motivations** | Professional identity | Professional culture |

This overarching theme addresses the demographic elements and the possible pathways by which pre-service teachers arrive at ITE. It examines the qualifications required, recruitment and retention of pre-service and beginning teachers and how they perceive themselves to be equipped by their ITE program in order to take their place within the professional community. The impact and influence of demographic elements such as gender and age are highlighted. Literature that explores individual preferences, such as geographical locations, school systems, year level and subject specialisations, are reviewed. Academic contributions to the collective understanding of professional motivations that influence some people choose to teach, perceived deterrents to entering the profession, and previous careers and the experiences of career-change teachers also are examined.

### 2.7.1 Demographics and pathway to teaching

Table 3.

*Overview of the research relevant to demographics and pathway to teaching.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Gender** | (Anliak & Beyazkurk, 2008; Drudy, 2008; Green, Machin, Murphy, & Zhu, 2012; Haase, 2008; Housego, 1992; Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010; Johnston, McKeown, & McEwen, 1999; Marshall, Robeson, & Keefe, 1999; Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; OECD, 2017; Ponte, 2012; Quenzel & Hurrelmann, 2013; Redmond & Harford, 2010; Riddell & Tett, 2010; Russell-Bowie, 2003; Stroud, Smith, Hurst, & Ealy, 2000; Sumsion, 2003; Tett & Riddell, 2009; Thornton & Bricheno, 2008; Weldon, 2015) |
| **The mature-age beginning teacher** | (Botwinik & Press, 2006; Brouwer, 2007; Cohen, 1971; Etherington, 2011; Harrell, Leavell, & van Tassel, 2004; Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010; Kaldi, 2009; Laming & Horne, 2013; Newman, 2010; Richardson et al., 2001; Richardson & Watt, 2002, 2006; Roychoudhury & Rice, 2012; Tigchelaar et al., 2008; Uusimaki, 2011; Walters, 2000; Williams & Forgasz, 2009) |
| **Qualifications for teachers** | (AITSL, 2017b; Ballou, 2003; Day, 2004; Flores, Desjean-Perrotta, & Steinmetz, 2004; Foley, 1999; Goe & Stickler, 2008; Hillman, Rothermel, & Scarano, 2006; Ingvarson, 2005; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002; Robson, 1958; Stevens & Miretzky, 2014; UTAS, 2007; Welch et al., 2010) |
| **Pathway to ITE** | (AITSL, 2017b; Berger & D'Ascoli, 2012; Finn & Madigan, 2001; Flores et al., 2004; Ingvarson et al., 2006; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002; Laming & Horne, 2013; Martinez, 2004; UTAS, 2007) |
| **Recruitment and retention** | (Bauer et al., 2017; Berry et al., 2011; Boe et al., 2006; Botwinik & Press, 2006; Chandler, 2011; Dicke, Elling, Schmeck, & Leutner, 2015; Everton, Turner, Hargreaves, & Pell, 2007; Ewing & Manuel, 2005; R. Gardner, 2010; Harrell et al., 2004; Hayes, 2004; Hutchison, 2012; B. Johnson & Down, 2013; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010; S. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Laming & Horne, 2013; Lang, 2001; Long et al., 2012; Martinez, 2004; Millward et al., 2012; O'Brien, Goddard, & Keeffe, 2008; Plunkett & Dyson, 2011; Ponte, 2012; Rhodes, Neville, et al., 2004; Richardson & Watt, 2002; T. Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Smithers & Robinson, 2003; Sumsion, 2003; Ward, 2011; Williams & Forgasz, 2009; Yüce, Şahin, Koçer, & Kana, 2013) |

Table 3. Continued.

*Overview of the research relevant to demographics and pathway to teaching.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Initial Teacher Education** | (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Aguirre & Haggerty, 1995; Al-Hassan, 2012; Bastick, 2000; Beck & Kosnik, 2003; Boe et al., 2006; Bond, 2011; Briody, 2005; Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Brownlee, Purdie, & Boulton-Lewis, 2010; Bullough, 2002; Bullough & Kauchak, 2010; Bullough & Kridel, 2003; Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Bullough et al., 2004; Cady et al., 2006; Carter & Francis, 2001; Cattley, 2007; Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013; DeLuca, 2012; Fazio & Volante, 2011; Flores et al., 2004; Hatton, 1985; Housego, 1992; Ingvarson, 2005; Kaldi, 2009; Kenny, 2010; Knowles, Elijah, & Broadwater, 1996; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002; Laming & Horne, 2013; Lang, 2001; Lenski, Crawford, Crumpler, & Stallworth, 2005; Louden & Rohl, 2006; Marble, 2012; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Morey, Bezuk, & Chiero, 1997; Ohn, 2013; L. Peralta & Burns, 2012; Robson, 1958; Roychoudhury & Rice, 2012; Saracho, 2013; Schulz & Mandzuk, 2005; Scott & Baker, 2003; Shiveley & Misco, 2010; Troxclair, 2013; Uusimaki, 2011; Wagner, 2008; B. White, 2009; Wing-mui So, 2012) |

#### 2.7.1.1 Gender

Teaching has been and still is a female-dominated space; the distribution of gender data confirms this observation (Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; Riddell & Tett, 2010). Many researchers have dedicated their time to investigating how and where males and females are distributed within the field of education. Importantly, many researchers seek to explain why disparity between the genders occurs within particular areas within the workforce (Drudy, 2008; Riddell & Tett, 2010; Thornton & Bricheno, 2008). Others examine what can be done to achieve a gender balance or even if gender matters in the classroom (Riddell & Tett, 2010). There continues to be differences in gender ratios in relation to education sectors and curriculum areas. Very few males are represented in early childhood classrooms. Allan (1993) claimed less than 3%. Equally, Australia's primary classrooms show continuing decline in male teachers, with as few as 20% teachers being male (Weldon, 2015). Although male pre-service teachers should be encouraged to feel that teaching in the Primary and Early Childhood years is an appropriate vocation for men (Housego, 1992), there are contrasting views regarding the contributions of men. Some consider that the presence of male teachers counteracts the historical fear that the feminine culture of schools impacts negatively on boys (Connell, 1997). Others see that increasing the presence of men in Early Childhood settings can challenge beliefs about gender, occupations and roles, thus disrupting gender stereotypes and segregation (Marshall et al., 1999). Although Montecinos and Nielsen (2004) agree that male teachers are necessary to model differentiated gender-roles for the socialisation of children, they cite Sargent (2000), who found that males in the Early Childhood domain experienced gendered expectations in their workplaces that were consistent with the stereotypical roles of men despite their chosen profession. For example, male teachers were expected to provide technical support, tend to physical tasks such as heavy lifting, were called to manage more difficult students or to be spokespersons for dealing with male senior staff and school leaders. Tett and Riddell (2009) noted in their research, that despite their minority status, none of the male teacher participants felt isolated or marginalised at work. In fact, men

experienced positive differential treatment as the administrative staff were more likely to be accommodating to requests for assistance with tasks such as printing, photocopying or typing.

Although teaching was once dominated by men (Redmond & Harford, 2010), the 1800s saw a significant change. Teaching was one of the first occupations that were considered acceptable for middle-class women to enter as an extension of the nurturing role. Research revealed that male participants reported a desire to nurture and role model for children, particularly those who do not have a father at home (Redmond & Harford, 2010). Being viewed as a provider of care for children, however, is challenging for men as this is generally considered the purview of women (Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004). Despite teaching being considered the domain of women today, much is being done to enhance gender equality in teaching. Legislation introduced in the UK in 2007 required public bodies to prove they are proactively promoting equality for men and women and to have a gender equality scheme in place (Tett & Riddell, 2009). Despite these initiatives, the gender imbalance remains evident for many countries in the developed world (OECD, 2017; Sumsion, 2003).

As the majority of teachers within the profession are female, as is certainly the case for classroom teaching, management positions continue to be held mostly by men (Tett & Riddell, 2009) supporting the hegemonic stereotype of the role of men in education. Those that are employed in Primary school settings tend to be in the upper Primary years, from Grades 4, 5 and 6 (Allan, 1993). Montecinos and Nielsen (2004) observed that the majority of male teachers did not envisage themselves as classroom teachers throughout their professional careers. This was, consistent with later observations of male teachers who clustered in the upper Primary years. They tended to hold aspirations as administrators or school leaders which would place them in a position to oversee those working directly with children (Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004). This is a legitimate and achievable goal for men in teaching as "unlike women in non-traditional careers, men

appear to benefit from their high visibility and assumptions about their authority" (Tett & Riddell, 2009, p. 487). Assumed male careerism resulted in additional professional learning opportunities that improved the male teachers' chances for promotion.

In contrast to the perceived benefits to being male in the teaching profession, men entering teaching, particularly those in the Primary or Early Childhood sectors are subject to scrutiny regarding their motivations (Thornton & Bricheno, 2008). Questions pertaining to sexuality, mothering roles or sinister intent hang over the heads of men choosing to teach (Anliak & Beyazkurk, 2008; Drudy, 2008; Johnston et al., 1999; Thornton & Bricheno, 2008) impacting the attractiveness of the profession and deterring potentially suitable candidates. Such deterrents to teaching often see those with a desire to teach take other opportunities and follow other career pathways initially. Some later return to teaching as career-changers or mature-age pre-service teachers.

#### 2.7.1.2 The mature-age beginning teacher

Although pre-service teachers entering the profession through alternative pathways are on average much older than those in typical undergraduate teacher education programs (Tigchelaar et al., 2008), their motivation to teach is strong. A desire to enter into teaching later in life often stems from deeply personal reasons, such as a desire to change undesirable socio-economic situations or in response to life changes such as divorce or redundancy (Tigchelaar et al., 2008). As a dominant driver for choosing to teach, pre-service teachers' desire to contribute to the wider community is aligned with a desire to improve negative or redundant self-concepts and to improve perceived self-worth (Walters, 2000).

Mature-age pre-service teachers often work concurrently in other occupations while they undertake their initial teacher education (Richardson et al., 2001). Their broad range of backgrounds, skills and experiences contribute significantly to the diversity of the teaching profession, they are able to contribute to effective

teaching and learning as they bring their lived experiences from other occupations into the school and classroom context (Richardson & Watt, 2002; Williams & Forgasz, 2009). Perhaps because of this perceived experience, there is the assumption that career-change beginning teachers are able to reach professional teaching competence more rapidly than their peers who have taken a more direct pathway into teaching (Brouwer, 2007; Tigchelaar et al., 2008). However, they often find difficulty processing their beliefs about teaching, their preconceived notions of the nature of teaching and learning and the need to learn new pedagogical strategies (Richardson & Watt, 2006). Because of these, their lived experience of their initial teacher education can be affected by their motivations, expectations and outcomes (Walters, 2000). Furthermore, despite their significant contributions to the teaching profession and their strong motivations for choosing teaching, mature-age or career-change teachers are as at-risk of not being retained by the profession as those that take a more direct route into teaching (Tigchelaar et al., 2008).

The skills acquired through ITE are considered transferable to a number of alternative settings. Higher education programs, including education degrees, actively teach transferable skills (Foley, 1999; Stevens & Miretzky, 2014). Graduate teachers often capitalise on the opportunity to travel and to apply their newly acquired qualifications to a variety of contexts. Others after a lengthy career, post-retirement from full-time teaching, seek short or long term contracts in unique settings or foreign countries. These opportunities are considered an attractive component of the profession (Botwinik & Press, 2006). Schools both local and overseas, teachers of English in foreign countries, schools for military personnel, adult education as well as industry, public, private sectors and continuing education settings all provide additional avenues for qualified teachers (Botwinik & Press, 2006). Opportunities for experienced teachers to be involved in mentoring or tutoring also exist based on the nature of the qualifications and experience obtained.

#### 2.7.1.3 Qualifications and pathway to ITE

In Australia, those choosing to teach must obtain their teaching qualifications through an approved program as well as meeting the requirements set out by the Teachers Registration Board of their state (AITSL, 2017b). Many universities with Schools of Education offer undergraduate, postgraduate and higher research degrees in the field. While many pre-service teachers choose the Bachelor of Education program at the University of Tasmania, some choose an alternate pathway such as the Bachelor of Teaching (B. Teach). The prerequisite for this program is the previous completion of a degree in another discipline or a relevant trade qualification and experience (UTAS, 2007). These programs are similar to some of the Alternate Certification Programs (ACPs) offered in the United States as described by Flores et al. (2004). Similar to the Australian context, most undergraduate programs are commenced directly following Year 12. Those choosing to take the alternative pathway into teaching tend to be career-changers with several years' experience in other fields (Finn & Madigan, 2001; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002). In the United States, the concept of ACPs has varied meanings pertaining to alternative pathways.

#### 2.7.1.4 Recruitment, retention and ITE

Regardless of the pathway taken, it is widely known that despite efforts in the recruitment of teachers, retaining them has proved challenging (Ingersoll et al., 2012; S. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Sumsion, 2003). Ewing and Manuel (2005) noted the efforts in Australia to raise teacher recruitment rates and improve teacher quality but recognised the upward trend in early career teacher attrition rates Australia-wide.

Regardless of efforts of stakeholders in initial teacher education to attract quality entrants, induct and mentor them, early career teachers in Australia and other countries in the Western world leave the profession (Ewing & Manuel, 2005). In Australia, up to one-third of beginning teachers resign in their first three to five years of teaching (Ewing & Manuel, 2005). Smithers and Robinson (2003) cite

similar results in their seminal report on the factors affecting teachers' decisions to the leave the profession in England. Factors such as workload, a new challenge, the impact of the school teaching context, salary and personal circumstances were cited as contributing factors in the decision to exit the profession (Smithers & Robinson, 2003). Similarly, salary and benefits, and workplace conditions were also identified by Harrell et al. (2004) in the United States. In addition to the list of contributing factors, they added issues of difficult students and a lack of collegial support as reasons for premature resignation. Of these factors, salary and benefits were cited most as being the deciding element in leaving, even though they were discounted as a motivation for entering teaching.

In order for these teachers to be successful in their early teaching experiences, increased pedagogical knowledge through enhanced teacher education and ongoing professional development is needed, as well as increased remuneration (Harrell et al., 2004). Botwinik and Press (2006) highlight teacher redundancy incentive packages is one such mechanism employed to contribute to this outcome. These mechanisms encourage the early retirement of teachers at the top of the pay scale to step aside for less experienced and less expensive teachers. While some benefits flow from this approach, this strategy inadvertently removes experienced teachers and mentors from the school setting, depriving graduate teachers of other benefits that come from the modelling and support that these more experienced educators and leaders provide (Hutchison, 2012; T. Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

### 2.7.2 Personal preferences

Table 4.

*Overview of the research relevant to personal preferences.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Teaching locations** | (Berry et al., 2011; Chandler, 2011; De Cooman et al., 2007; Easthope & Easthope, 2000; Forgasz & Leder, 2006; P. Hudson & Hudson, 2008; S. Hudson & Millwater, 2009; Kenny, 2010; Martinez, 2004; Ministerial Council on Education, 2003; Morrison, 2013a; Richardson & Watt, 2002, 2005, 2006; Sharplin, 2002; Ward, 2011; Williams & Forgasz, 2009; Yarrow, Ballantyne, Hansford, Herschell, & Millwater, 1999) |
| **Year level specialisations** | (Everton et al., 2007; Harrell et al., 2004; Hunt, Wiseman, & Touzel, 2009; Johnston et al., 1999; Mellado, Bermejo, & Mellado, 2012; Newman, 2010; Saracho, 2013; Thornton, 1990, 1995; Thornton & Bricheno, 2008) |
| **Subject specialisations** | (Aguirre & Haggerty, 1995; Berger & D'Ascoli, 2012; Berry et al., 2011; Cady et al., 2006; Childs & McNicholl, 2007; Colleen Conway, Erin Hansen, Andrew Schulz, Jeff Stimson, & Jill Wozniak-Reese, 2004; Fazio & Volante, 2011; Forgasz & Leder, 2006; R. Gardner, 2010; Hutchison, 2012; Jobling & Moni, 2004; Kenny, 2010; Ohn, 2013; Rizza, 2000; Russell-Bowie, 2003; Thornton, 1990, 1995; Unglaub, 1997; B. White, 2009) |
| **School systems** | (Department of Education Tasmania, 2017; R. Gardner, 2010; Green et al., 2012; Pinnegar et al., 2011; Plunkett & Dyson, 2011) |

#### 2.7.2.1 Teaching locations

Teacher shortages in many Western countries continue to be debated (De Cooman et al., 2007). The issue in Australia's rural schools has been of concern for many years (P. Hudson & Hudson, 2008; S. Hudson & Millwater, 2009). Martinez (2004) highlights the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (2003) prediction that rural schools and remote locations will be under severe pressure by 2010, particularly in subject areas such as Mathematics and Science (Williams & Forgasz, 2009). Richardson and Watt (2006) add hard-to-staff rural and urban schools to this list of those most impacted, with data indicating that this issue is not confined to Australia. Countries like the United States also struggle to supply rural schools with qualified teachers (Berry et al., 2011).

While it is recognised that recruitment for these teaching locations is difficult, little has been done to respond to meeting this need in a cohesive way (Halsey, 2018; Yarrow et al., 1999). Research by Sharplin (2002) identified the expectations of pre-service teachers living and teaching in rural Australian communities, as well as the professional, personal and social challenges anticipated by pre-service teachers. This research revealed that expectations of pre-service teachers tended to be vague and that word of mouth from friends and colleagues about living and teaching in rural areas was often an important source of information. Although those interviewed and surveyed expressed apprehensions of a lack of access to mentoring, professional development or experienced colleagues, it was the personal and social challenges that were of greatest concern. Being away from family, friends and support networks were a source of anxiety but secondary to their concerns about fitting into the rural community.

Learning to teach in the rural context has a number of attractive qualities such as professional opportunities and leadership, small school sizes and a varied school experience (Sharplin, 2002). Sharplin (2002) described the attraction of an active social life within the local community and the novel experience of being part of a diverse community as attractive components to rural teaching despite the perceived isolation. Several writers have recommended that initial teacher education providers expose their pre-service teachers to a broad range of rural contexts through Professional Experiences in order to address some of

the difficulties of staffing and retention in these areas (Halsey, 2018; P. Hudson & Hudson, 2008; S. Hudson & Millwater, 2009; Sharplin, 2002).

#### 2.7.2.2 Year level and subject specialisations

Having both a deep understanding of subject content knowledge and effective teaching strategies are crucial prerequisites for effective teaching (Hunt et al., 2009). Year level and subject specialisations: Early Childhood, Primary or Secondary, requires a unique skill set. The term 'specialist' is frequently used in reference to curriculum subject areas as opposed to Early Childhood, Primary or Secondary (Thornton, 1995, p. 5). Early Childhood and Primary teachers are considered 'generalists' whereas Secondary teachers are identified by their subject specialisation (p. 5).

#### 2.7.2.3 School systems

In 2017, The Department of Education is the largest employer of registered teachers in Tasmania, catering for the educational needs of learners from birth (Department of Education Tasmania, 2017). Similarly, in the UK, the public school sector is the major provider of education and employer of teachers. However, private schools in the UK employ an increasingly-disproportionate share of the teaching force per student numbers (Green, Zhu, Machin, & Murphy, 2008). The public system is an important space for recruitment for private schools, with many teachers employed by private schools and systems tending to possess both postgraduate qualifications and to be specialists in high-demand subject areas. There is evidence of substantial pay incentives for teachers of high demand subjects to work in the private sector in Britain. Green et al. (2008) determined that working conditions such as pay, flexibility and reduced unpaid work hours were "clearly better in the private sector" (p. 397). Although Pinnegar et al. (2011) report that "Pre-service teachers are altruistic, with service orientated goals and are motivated by a high sense of job satisfaction rather than merely a paycheck" (p. 639), pay incentives are an attractive aspect of the teaching profession in some settings.

### 2.7.3 Personal motivations

Table 5.

*Overview of the research relevant to personal motivations.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Choosing to teach** | (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Berger & D'Ascoli, 2012; Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2011; Bullough & Young, 2002; Etherington, 2011; Forgasz & Leder, 2006; Hayes, 2004; Housego, 2006; S. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; König & Rothland, 2012; Laming & Horne, 2013; Newman, 2010; Richardson et al,. 2001; Richardson & Watt, 2006; Stroud et al., 2000; Thornton & Bricheno, 2008; Troman & Raggl, 2008; Watt & Richardson, 2007; Watt et al., 2012) |
| **Deterrents to teaching** | (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Davies et al., 2016; Green et al., 2012; Harrell et al., 2004; Hayes, 2004; Park, 2006) |
| **Previous careers** | (Hayes, 2004; S. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; König & Rothland, 2012; Millward et al., 2012; Newman, 2010; Richardsonet al,. 2001; Richardson & Watt, 2005; Uusimaki, 2011; Watt et al., 2012) |

#### 2.7.3.1 Choosing to teach

With an ageing teacher population both nationally and internationally, and teacher shortages in many subject areas (OECD, 2005), Australian states and territories have promoted teaching in an effort to recruit from other sectors and careers (Richardson & Watt, 2002). Current initiatives such as Teach for Australia, a fast-track employment-based pathway to teaching, aims to recruit high achieving graduates from a variety of fields (DET, 2017). This program then provides an intensive training period and school placement, locating participants in disadvantaged schools. Such initiatives endeavor to address the recommendations of TEMAG (2014a) to provide rigorous selection into ITE and improved and structured practical experience for pre-service teachers in an attempt to both increase the quality of graduate teachers and retain them in the profession through secured employment.

For some time, researchers have observed that teacher salaries and professional work conditions present as unattractive to most talented university graduates (Richardson & Watt, 2002; Sumsion, 2003). One of the challenges of recruitment into the teaching profession is that despite the strong influence of the perceived 'intrinsic' rather than 'extrinsic' rewards of teaching, those interested in highly paid, high status jobs did not consider teaching a viable career option (Abbott-Chapman et al., 1991; Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Bakar & Salleh, 2017; Rhodes, Neville, et al., 2004). Prospective teachers who considered the 'altruistic' reward of helping people as valuable, seek a personal interest and involvement in their profession and pursue the benefit of the mental stimulation the role provides (Yüce et al., 2013). The prospect of job security and meeting family-based needs, although pragmatic concerns are of importance to those seeking to teach (Ponte, 2012; Richardson et al., 2001; Rots, Aelterman, Devos, & Vlerick, 2010). Many who choose to teach do so because of the influence of family, friends, a former teacher, and/or an interest in working with children (Pinnegar et al., 2011; Ponte, 2012; Yüce et al., 2013).

Richardson and Watt (2002) found that for many career-change pre-service teachers, the choice to teach was influenced by family circumstances and responsibilities. The perception of job security and work hours more consistent with a quality family life was seen as attractive in the teaching profession, even at the expense of higher salaries. Teaching is often perceived as a satisfying and family-friendly career that allows teachers to make a difference in the wider community although in reality for some, this may not be the case (Richardson et al., 2001).

#### 2.7.3.2 Deterrents to teaching

Teacher quality is critical to student outcomes and school improvement (Davies et al., 2016). While much is being done to attract quality entrants to classroom teaching, there are perceived deterrents to choosing to teach (Park, 2006). The relational aspects and elements of the profession, such as working with children, close interactions with others, contributing to the wider community and helping students learn, are acknowledged by those considering teaching as a profession, as attractive factors of teaching (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Hayes, 2004). Responsibilities which take away from these elements, such as increased administrative demands, are not only a professional challenge but a barrier and deterrent to teachers work (Hayes, 2004).

#### 2.7.3.3 Previous careers

The deterrents to teaching align closely with the reasons for leaving the profession. Issues such as overwork, poor remuneration, limited assurance of permanency once qualified, community expectations, challenging student behaviour and low social status are regularly cited in the literature (Hayes, 2004; P. Hudson & Hudson, 2008; Ingersoll et al., 2012; B. Johnson & Down, 2013; Park, 2006). Even though those entering teaching claim to do so for reasons other than work conditions and financial reward, the realisation of the proportional workload often forces them to reconsider their career choice (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012;

Hayes, 2004; Thomson, Turner, & Nietfeld, 2012; Watt & Richardson, 2007; Watt et al., 2012; Williams & Forgasz, 2009; Yüce et al., 2013). Promoting greater alignment between ideals and the actuality of classroom teaching is needed to avoid disillusionment if recruitment and retention are to be less problematic (Dicke et al., 2015; Hayes, 2004; Lang, 2001).

Attracting quality teachers is not limited to targeting school leavers. Many adult learners from a broad range of previous work experience or those returning to work after a period of career interruption are attracted to the teaching profession (Richardson et al., 2001) and provide another, valuable avenue for recruitment (Tigchelaar et al., 2008). A greater understanding of the motivations and previously acquired skills of this demographic would shape initial teacher preparation to cater for the needs of these potential teachers (Bauer et al., 2017; Laming & Horne, 2013).

## 2.8 Professional influences

This section explores the second of three overarching themes of the literature review. See Table 6.

Table 6.

*Overarching themes of the literature review – Professional influences.*

| Pre-service and graduate teachers | **Professional motivations and influences** | Professional teaching contexts |
|---|---|---|
| **Demographics and pathway to teaching** | Rewarding aspects of teaching | Practice of teaching and required competencies |
| **Personal preferences** | Challenging aspects of teaching | Professional structures |
| **Personal motivations** | Professional identity | Professional culture |

An examination of the rewarding and challenging aspects of the teaching profession as well as the development of emerging professional identity is presented in this section. Intrinsic, altruistic and professional elements are rewards which both motivate and sustain educators in the teaching profession. A number of personal and professional challenges exist for pre-service and graduate teachers relevant to the individual, the lived experience of ITE and early teaching contexts. This literature theme incorporates a review of the contributing and competing factors that determine and impact the development of professional identity. Pre-service and graduate teachers' personal metaphors for teaching, personal attributes and established images of the role of a teacher, all influence their developing professional identities. The personal context of early career teaching determines the quality of the lived experience and provides the

lens through which pre-service and graduate teachers view their new profession and their own place within their professional communities (Allen et al., 2016; Aspfors & Bondas, 2013; Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009; Weadon, 2007).

### 2.8.1 Rewarding aspects of teaching

Table 7.

*Overview of the research relevant to rewarding aspects of teaching.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic rewards** | (Anderson & Anderson, 1995; Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Bakar & Salleh, 2017; Bastick, 2000; Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2011; De Cooman et al., 2007; Ponte, 2012; Rhodes, Neville, et al., 2004; Sharif, Upadhyay, & Ahmed, 2016; Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011; Thomson et al., 2012) |

#### 2.8.1.1 Intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic rewards

The rewards of teaching are difficult to quantify as they are unique to the individual. However, through their quest to identify motivations for choosing to teach some researchers have revealed the perceived rewards of working in the teaching profession (De Cooman et al., 2007; Ponte, 2012; Thomson et al., 2012). Ponte (2012) determined two key rewards as the promotion of learning in and out of the classroom and the joy of interacting with children and adolescents. The participants in Ponte's study expanded on these themes, indicating that imparting knowledge and making learning meaningful was intrinsically rewarding, as was the experience of working with children and 'seeing them smile' (p. 48). Altruistic and intrinsic motivations for entering teaching dominate the literature (Bakar & Salleh, 2017; Bastick, 2000; Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2011; De Cooman et al., 2007; Ponte, 2012; Spilt et al., 2011; Thomson et al., 2012).

It is generally considered that positive relationships with children provide teachers with intrinsic rewards and give meaning to their work (Anderson & Anderson, 1995; Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012; Sharif et al., 2016). In schools where school-based relationships are mutually respectful, consultative and collaborative, intrinsic motivation and reward are likely to be increased (Rhodes, Neville, et al., 2004). However, working with children is cited as a significant reason for not only choosing to teach, but for staying in the profession (Spilt et al., 2011). The desire to be an agent for change in children's lives (Ponte, 2012) is an important altruistic motivator and source of reward for prospective teachers.

### 2.8.2 Challenging aspects of teaching

Table 8.

*Overview of the research relevant to challenging aspects of teaching.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Professional challenges** | (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Anderson & Anderson, 1991, 1995; Boe et al., 2006; Dombrowski, Ahia, & McQuillan, 2003; Easthope & Easthope, 2000, 2007; Everton et al., 2007; Fan, 2017; Flores et al., 2004; Forgasz & Leder, 2006; Giallo & Little, 2003; Ginns, Heirdsfield, Atweh, & Watters, 2001; Goldman, 2010; Hargreaves, 1990; Harrell et al., 2004; Jobling & Moni, 2004; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, & Hunter, 2010; Lang, 2001; Lederman & Lederman, 2015; Lee, 2008; Pietsch & Williamson, 2004, 2005, 2009; Rhodes, Nevill, & Allen, 2004; Thomson & Palermo, 2014; B. White, 2009) |
| **Personal challenges** | (Berry et al., 2011; Buchanan et al., 2013; Bunten, 2014; Dombrowski et al., 2003; Flores et al., 2004; R. Gardner, 2010; Goldman, 2010; Gu & Day, 2007, 2013; Hopkins, Hoffman, & Moss, 1997; Huberman, 1993; Jobling & Moni, 2004; B. Johnson & Down, 2013; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010; Lang, 2001; Martinez, 2004; McDonald, 2010; Pietsch & Williamson, 2009; Shine, 2015; K. Sullivan, Perry, & McConney, 2014; Thornton, Bricheno, & Reid, 2002; Unglaub, 1997; B. White, 2009; J. White & Moss, 2003) |

#### 2.8.2.1 Personal and professional challenges

The discourse on the nature of teachers' work and the perceived challenges faced by teachers invariably recognises the professional demands of increasing workloads, complexities of organisational and administrative tasks, funding strain and work intensification (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Easthope & Easthope, 2000, 2007; Forgasz & Leder, 2006; Gu & Day, 2013; Hargreaves, 1989; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010).These stressors relate to and impact on related conditions like teacher stress and teacher burnout and lead to a high rate of attrition (Boe et al., 2006; Fan, 2017; R. Gardner, 2010; Giallo & Little, 2003; König & Rothland, 2012; O'Brien et al., 2008; Thomson & Palermo, 2014). These concerns proved to be the "seeds of non-retention" (p. 67) that are planted early in a teacher's career (Rhodes, Neville, et al., 2004). As a result, some argue that the teaching profession is 'simply too complex', exacerbated by the constant bombardment of numerous contextual and political concerns (Lederman & Lederman, 2015, p. 1). Such complexity and scrutiny present beginning teachers with increased levels of challenge.

As the societal landscape has altered, the demands placed upon teachers have increased (Easthope & Easthope, 2000, 2007; Forgasz & Leder, 2006; C. Gardner & Williamson, 2007; Shine, 2015). Teachers feel they must dedicate more time and energy to pastoral care, humanistic goals and behaviour management and feel philosophically torn between this and the administrative and academic demands of the role (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Giallo & Little, 2003). Student behaviour has been reported to be a primary source of stress and negative emotion for teachers (Giallo & Little, 2003) however Spilt et al. (2011) maintains that it is not so much the behaviour of students as teachers' perception of the behaviour and daily emotional experiences of teachers that need to be considered in regard to the interpersonal relationships between teachers and students (A. Sullivan, Johnson, & Lucas, 2016). These authors went on to say that when teacher-student relationships are strained, this presents a fundamental

challenge and frustration of the relationship that causes stress and diminishes teacher wellbeing (McDonald, 2010, 2013; Spilt et al., 2011).

Teachers in the Tasmanian context have also identified longer work hours, increased class sizes, increased professional, pastoral and administrative duties as factors contributing to the challenges of working in the teaching profession (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Easthope & Easthope, 2000, 2007; Forgasz & Leder, 2006). They are expected to demonstrate resilience while under the pressure of decreased funding in education, changing curriculum and assessment requirements, changing administration structures and changing student populations, a scenario that is equally relevant today (Easthope & Easthope, 2000, 2007; B. Johnson & Down, 2012). Easthope and Easthope (2000) recognised that teachers tended to commit to the humanistic values of teaching despite the challenges but acknowledged the cost as a reduction of satisfaction in the role. In addition to the humanistic elements of teaching, a strong sense of efficacy in the role was found to be closely connected to teachers' commitment (Flores et al., 2004). This commitment is inclusive of understanding that transitioning into a new profession requires a period of learning new responsibilities, new accountabilities and taking on new expectations (B. Johnson et al., 2014). The challenges of this, for beginning teachers, can be a period of 'survival' (Lang, 2001, p. 2) rather than transition (Huberman, 1993; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011).

Expectations of teachers in the contemporary context are immense and ever-changing. It is acknowledged that the role of the teacher is ideally situated to contribute to society in a number of ways although primarily to the education and protection of children (Goldman, 2010). With increasing pressure on teachers to be responsible for all aspects of a child's well-being (Easthope & Easthope, 2000), issues such as mandatory reporting of child welfare concerns present many teachers with the personal and professional challenge of reporting suspected abuse (Dombrowski et al., 2003). Many pre-service teachers feel

unprepared to enact this responsibility in schools, regardless of their desire to do so (Goldman, 2010).

In a study of students who had been successfully recruited to primary initial teacher education programs, Thornton et al. (2002) showed students held deep concerns about their subsequent pay, workload, media image, status, hours, paperwork and stress. Concerns of low status, demoralized teachers and worsening retention, were seen to present a discouraging image to those considering entry into the profession (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Berry et al., 2011; Buchanan et al., 2013; R. Gardner, 2010; Gu & Day, 2013). Exhaustion, stress in personal and family relationships, domestic responsibilities, managing work/life balance and making time for leisure activities are additional personal challenges experienced by beginning teachers (Lang, 2001).

Teachers make a plethora of decisions every day that impact the lives of students, parents and colleagues, as well as their own (Bunten, 2014). With that responsibility comes the challenge of accountability. The interpersonal interactions between students, parents and staff, present opportunities to build and demonstrate resilience. In order to enact the teacher's role and to sustain it, one must be resilient (Gu & Day, 2007, 2013). Many factors contribute to the resilience and wellbeing of teachers, however, a lack of research into the interaction of personal and contextual factors surrounding early career teacher's experiences exists (B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010) leaving a void in understanding that could be key to retaining teachers in the profession.

### 2.8.3 Professional identity

Table 9.

*Overview of the research relevant to professional identity.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Personal attributes** | (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Bullough, 2005; Bullough et al., 2004; Cattley, 2007; Dicke et al., 2015; C. Gardner & Williamson, 2007; Goe & Stickler, 2008; Hillman et al., 2006; Housego, 2006; B. Johnson & Down, 2013; Laminack & Long, 1985; Lang, 2001; Marble, 2012; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Pietsch & Williamson, 2004, 2009; Plunkett & Dyson, 2011; Riddell & Tett, 2010; Shiveley & Misco, 2010; Walker, Newman, & Chambers, 1995; Walkington, 2005; Welch et al., 2010; Williams & Forgasz, 2009) |
| **Perception of the teacher's role** | (Anliak & Beyazkurk, 2008; Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Day, 2004; Drudy, 2008; Everton et al., 2007; Haase, 2008; Hayes, 2004; Hillman et al., 2006; B. Johnson & Down, 2012; S. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Johnston et al., 1999; Laminack & Long, 1985; Louden & Rohl, 2006; Mellado et al., 2012; Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; OECD, 2005; Owen, Kos, McKenzie, Australian Government Department of Education, & Workplace, 2008; Richardson & Watt, 2002, 2006; Summers, Stroud, Stroud, & Heaston, 1991; Thornton, 1995; Thornton & Bricheno, 2008; Troxclair, 2013; Van Hook, 2002; Walker et al., 1995) |
| **Metaphor for teaching** | (Brownlee et al., 2010; Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Cattley, 2007; Feiman-Nemser, Williamson McDiarmid, Melnick, & Parker, 1989; Haase, 2008; P. Hudson, 2013; P. Hudson & Hudson, 2008; S. Hudson & Millwater, 2009; Laminack & Long, 1985; Lortie, 1975; Mellado et al., 2012; Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; Pinnegar et al., 2011; Plunkett & Dyson, 2011; Ponte, 2012; Sumsion, 2003; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011; Van Hook, 2002; Walker et al., 1995; Zembylas, 2003) |

#### 2.8.3.1 Personal attributes

Pietsch and Williamson (2005) asserted "teacher professional identity can be regarded as those characteristics which define a teacher, and which simultaneously differentiate a teacher from a member of a different profession" (p. 365). This aspect of identity incorporates teacher decision making, teacher practice, beliefs, ideals and values and a way of describing a teacher's perception of self (Pietsch & Williamson, 2005). Teacher identities are central to teacher beliefs, values and behaviours that inform practices in and outside of the school setting (Walkington, 2005). Researchers have argued that the fundamental purpose of teacher education preparation is to form pre-service teachers' professional identity. Despite this, pre-service teachers tend to not identify as teachers or as members of the professional community until employed in a school (Thomson & Palermo, 2014).

Understanding oneself is central to being and becoming a teacher. The challenges of doing so are much broader than induction into the profession. It is not just an issue of assuming a teacher's professional identity but determining "how one will be for and with others" (Bullough, 2005, p. 144). The transition to being a teacher does not describe the acquisition of an identity or imitation of accepted teacher behaviours; rather it involves the creative responding to new situations and relationships that classrooms and schools present (Marble, 2012). A growing understanding of the complexity of teaching is essential in professional identity formation for pre-service teachers (Cattley, 2007; Zembylas, 2003).

Graduate teachers enter into a profession where they experience a 'reality shock' (Dicke et al., 2015; Lang, 2001; McCormack & Thomas, 2003). Learning to teach involves the integration of personal and professional elements such as knowledge of teaching, knowledge of schools and their systems, professional understanding and knowledge of self as a teacher (Pietsch & Williamson, 2009).

All of these contribute to the emerging professional identity of the pre-service teacher.

The consideration of teacher dispositions has long been connected to teacher effectiveness and suitability to the role (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Brookhart & Loadman, 1996). Cohen (1971) drew together literature from the 1960's that emphasised particular dogmatic personality types and that they should be deterred from the teaching profession for the good of the students. Lortie (1975) claimed that "an occupation will attract some persons and repel others. Out of the combinations which ensue, an occupation will be staffed by people of particular dispositions and life circumstances" (p.25). Stoddard, Braun, and Koorland (2011) Identify that family background and personal experiences shape the beliefs and dispositions that pre-service teachers bring to their initial teacher education although a lack of clarity as to how to infuse, teach and assess attitudes, beliefs and dispositions exists (Shiveley & Misco, 2010).

With teacher selection processes currently under review in Australia (AITSL, 2017b; TEMAG, 2014a, 2015), consideration of non-academic attributes and suitability for the teaching profession as well as academic attributes of entrants are being more closely examined. In the United States, the assessment and monitoring of pre-service teacher dispositions is a contentious debate within teacher education as pre-emptive judgement may exclude those who may develop into exceptional teachers (Welch et al., 2010). The evaluation of disposition is not currently mandated in Australia. Although Governments require more robust teacher selection, disposition and attitudes are not specified (TEMAG, 2015). Instead, the emphasis is on academic numeracy and literacy proficiency and the ability to demonstrate classroom readiness prior to graduation. The identification of positive attributes and qualities such as confidence and optimism (Pinnegar et al., 2011) coupled with positive emotions (Gu & Day, 2007, 2013) may assist beginning teachers to develop resilience and adjust to the rigours of the profession more successfully.

Zembylas (2003) noted the importance of teacher emotions in personal and professional development and identity. The emotions experienced and expressed by teachers reflect more than just personal disposition and are "constructed in social relationships and systems of values in their families, cultures and school situations" (p. 216). The seminal work by Nias (1989) demonstrated the personal investment in teaching by many teachers. It highlighted how teaching contributes to and shapes the person, the importance of interpersonal relationships with students and the contextual influences which impact self. Professional identities are now to be viewed as multiple, fragmented and prone to change rather than a fixed entity (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; R. Smith, 2007).

#### 2.8.3.2 Perception of the teacher's role

Teachers are the conduit between the child and the educative experience in schools and as such play a critical role in facilitating the teaching of both the visible and hidden curriculum (Hillman et al., 2006). The role of an effective teacher is not only to demonstrate a command of subject knowledge, or demonstrate effective communication skills, but also to be able to empathise and relate to learners through effective working relationships with them (Hayes, 2004). An element of demonstrating the role of the teacher is to role model to children. To do this, self-reflection is needed to understand oneself (Troxclair, 2013) and the feelings of children (Van Hook, 2002).

Previous extensive classroom experience as a student provides pre-service teachers with "13 years of experience [of] having been a student participating in a classroom and observing teacher behaviours, thus developing a body of values, orientations, commitments, and practices" (Van Hook, 2002, p. 144). This has also been raised as problematic, where pre-existing beliefs and perspectives are difficult to shift (Lortie, 1975). Despite this, understandings of teachers and teaching create stories for how schooling works. Bullough and Stokes (1994) acknowledged the long recognised relationship between metaphors for teaching and teacher identity. Metaphors are not only a vehicle for expression but provide

insight into deeper meanings and conceptualisation of an individual (Mellado et al., 2012). Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) highlight the usefulness of using metaphors to capture the complexity of teaching and identity in "vivid and insightful ways" (p. 764).

Contributing to the metaphoric interpretation of self as a teacher, is the definition of teacher's work. What it is that teachers do, is connected to public perception and how those considering entering teaching perceive the teaching profession. Teachers themselves both shape their public image and are shaped by it (Everton et al., 2007). The poor public perception of teachers in the USA is frequently fuelled by the media where presumed student failure is the responsibility of teachers and teacher preparation providers (Bullough, 2002). OECD (2005) reports that perceptions of teaching in Australia are positive, as it is in Japan, Switzerland, Canada and England. While Australian teachers are well regarded by employers internationally (Louden & Rohl, 2006), B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al. (2010) cites Ministerial Council on Education (2003) in the recognition of the increased complexity of teachers' work and the decreased public standing of the profession. Teachers perceive teaching as an "overworked and demoralised profession" (Hayes, 2004, p. 37) and tend to underestimate the respect that the public has for the occupation (Everton et al., 2007). Despite Governments around the world acknowledging the importance of teachers and recognising that quality teachers and practice are critical to the development and sustainability of an intelligent and informed citizenry (Richardson & Watt, 2006), teachers continue to feel undervalued.

#### 2.8.3.3 Metaphors for teaching

The language used by pre-service and practising teachers to communicate their conceptions, roles and professional work is not literal but symbolic and metaphoric. It is reflective of an individual's experience and connections to their social environment (Mellado et al., 2012). The work of Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) utilising metaphors to allow pre-service and beginning teachers to express

and describe their professional identity development, revealed that through metaphors, the teacher as a person is held central to the description rather than the work and context of their experience. This research by Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) exposed the varied path of identity development 'fraught with self-doubt and questioning' (p. 767) that is synonymous with the beginning teacher experience.

The images of what it is to teach and to be a teacher can be tenaciously held onto throughout initial teacher education and their practice imitative and based on individual personalities rather than pedagogical principles (Lortie, 1975). The importance of understanding pre-service teacher metaphors cannot be underestimated. Pinnegar et al. (2011) point out that metaphors capture the potential plotline for teacher-student interactions, educational purpose and teaching and learning assumptions held by pre-service teachers. As such, understanding them has the power to create conceptual change in the perspectives and identities of the pre-service teacher. Zembylas (2003) challenged the assumption that there is a single "teacher self" or a "teacher identity" (p. 214). Instead, he emphasises that teaching is not just a technical endeavour, but inextricably linked to teachers' personal lives, of which the emotional response to the experience is essential.

## 2.9 Context of practice

This section explores the third of three overarching themes of the literature review. See Table 10.

Table 10.

*Overarching themes of the literature review – Context of practice.*

| Pre-service and graduate teachers | Professional motivations and influences | Professional teaching contexts |
|---|---|---|
| **Demographics and pathway to teaching** | Rewarding aspects of teaching | Practice of teaching and required competencies |
| **Personal preferences** | Challenging aspects of teaching | Professional structures |
| **Personal motivations** | Professional identity | Professional culture |

This section draws attention to the professional contexts of teaching, including the practice of teaching and required competencies, professional structures and the professional cultures that ensue. The practice of teaching is multi-faceted and is the amalgamation of the relationship between theory and practice, skills, knowledge and understanding of teaching (Grushka, McLeod, & Reynolds, 2005; Segall, 2001). The success of teaching practice is described as teacher quality; an assessment of professional performance. Pre-service teachers have the opportunity to apply theory and practise during Professional Experience. In this context, the key features of professional practice: planning, teaching, assessment and reflection are demonstrated and the complexity of teaching is revealed (Le Cornu, 2015; Morrison, 2016). The context of practice also incorporates the

professional structures made available to support teachers in the workplace environment. The availability of mentoring and staff support can have a profound impact on the perception of the lived experience as does the role of the colleague teacher as pre-service and graduate teachers begin to navigate the professional context. Professional culture is closely aligned within the workplace and is individualised to the teaching context. The student, staff and parent relationships within the context, the public perception of the profession or the school context influence the quality of the teaching experience (Al-Hassan, 2012; Allen et al., 2016; du Plessis et al., 2014; DüNdar, 2014; Easthope & Easthope, 2007; Morrison, 2013a, 2013b; Stoddard et al., 2011).

### 2.9.1 Practice of teaching and required competencies

Table 11.

*Overview of the research relevant to the practice of teaching and required competencies.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Relationship between theory and practice** | (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008; Briody, 2005; Bunten, 2014; Childs & McNicholl, 2007; Crump, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005; Day, 2004; Easthope & Easthope, 2000, 2007; Flores et al., 2004; Forgasz & Leder, 2006; Goodson, 1995; Grushka et al., 2005; Ingvarson, 2005; Jobling & Moni, 2004; Le Cornu, 2010; Louden & Rohl, 2006; Ogunniyi & Rollnick, 2015; Ohn, 2013; L. Peralta & Burns, 2012; Pietsch & Williamson, 2009; Rinke & Stebick, 2013; Schulz & Mandzuk, 2005; Segall, 2001; Shine, 2015; Swain, Nordness, & Leader-Janssen, 2012; Troxclair, 2013; Volante & Fazio, 2007; Zeichner & Schulte, 2001) |
| **Skills, knowledge and understanding** | (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Al-Hassan, 2012; Allen et al., 2016; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008; du Plessis et al., 2014; DüNdar, 2014; Easthope & Easthope, 2007; Flores et al., 2004; Ginns et al., 2001; Grushka et al., 2005; König & Rothland, 2012; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002; Le Cornu, 2015; McCormack, Gore, & Thomas, 2006; Morrison, 2013a, 2013b, 2016; Nance & Fawns, 1993; Scott & Baker, 2003; Segall, 2001; Stoddard et al., 2011; Swain et al., 2012; Tirri & Ubani, 2013; Troxclair, 2013; Wagner, 2008; Welch et al., 2010; B. White, 2009) |
| **Professional performance/Teacher quality** | (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Flores et al., 2004; Giallo & Little, 2003; Ingvarson, 2002, 2005; Ingvarson et al., 2006; Russell-Bowie, 2003) |
| **Professional Experience** | (Al-Hassan, 2012; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008; Boe et al., 2006; Bullough, 2002; Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Cattley, 2007; Fazio & Volante, 2011; Hopkins et al., 1997; Ingvarson, 2005; Rinke & Stebick, 2013; J. White & Moss, 2003) |
| **Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting** | (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Bullough & Kauchak, 2010; Bullough & Kridel, 2003; Ell & Grudnoff, 2013; Ell, Hill, & Grudnoff, 2012; C. Gardner & Williamson, 2007; Ginns et al., 2001; Goe & Stickler, 2008; Harrell et al., 2004; Hattie, 2003a, 2003b; Ingvarson, 2002, 2005; Lenski et al., 2005; Long et al., 2012; Parker, Templin, & Setiawan, 2012; Thornton, 1990, 1995; Treagust, Won, Petersen, & Wynne, 2015) |

#### 2.9.1.1 Relationship between theory and practice

Teachers are key to the success of student learning in the classroom. It is important to understand teachers' practices (Bunten, 2014), specifically as they relate to how the demands of the role are enacted in the classroom context. The value of both theory and practice in initial teacher education is often contested between pre-service teachers and teacher educators (Segall, 2001). Pre-service teachers typically hold that significant learning takes place in the classroom and is of greater value than other elements of initial teacher education program (Childs & McNicholl, 2007; Ingvarson, 2005). This perceived disparity between what is taught at university (theory) and the enacting of teaching (practice) in the classroom is commonly reported (Childs & McNicholl, 2007; Schulz & Mandzuk, 2005).

Pre-service teachers see theory and practice as belonging to separate domains: university (theory) and schools (practical) (Childs & McNicholl, 2007; Segall, 2001). This separation between the two need not exist and theory and practice integration in ITE can occur through reconceptualising theoretical aims in ways that are engaged with teachers' life and work (Briody, 2005; Goodson, 1995). Teachers confirm that policy makers and planners have dramatically reconceptualised teachers work over a period of years (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Crump, 2005; Easthope & Easthope, 2000, 2007; Forgasz & Leder, 2006; Shine, 2015). What is consistently identified as the core business of teachers is the planning, teaching, assessment, rewarding students and collaboration with students and colleagues in the classroom (Crump, 2005). Of these core business competencies, assessment of student learning presents pre-service and graduate teachers with a high level of challenge as they feel underprepared to undertake the task of measuring and reporting on student learning (Volante & Fazio, 2007). Similar is the concern and anxiety about student inclusion and differentiating curriculum for students with additional learning needs (Jobling & Moni, 2004).

Teachers' personal practical knowledge of teaching, although described in a variety of ways by different researchers, comprises "knowledge, beliefs and skills about teachers and teaching, curriculum, students, learners and learning, general principles of instruction and classroom management and the capacity of teachers to move beyond knowing about teaching to knowing how to integrate these aspects of knowledge in the act of teaching" (Pietsch & Williamson, 2009, p. 6). Regardless of how it is framed, the integration of theory and practice is critical to the success of the pre-service and beginning teacher. Teacher preparation providers are accountable in preparing graduate teachers who recognise the complexity of teaching, are reflective of their practice and make informed pedagogical decisions while considering multiple perspectives (Schulz & Mandzuk, 2005). Initial teacher preparation requires teachers to be reflective practitioners to utilise teaching cycle frameworks and encourage pre-service teachers to undertake action research that connects their theory with practice (Grushka et al., 2005).

Initial teacher education is instrumental in and responsible for ensuring that pre-service teachers develop knowledge and skills that enhance student outcomes through best practice teaching (Ohn, 2013) specific to the needs and year levels of their students. Swain et al. (2012) draw attention to the plight of pre-service teachers who feel underprepared to provide a high-quality educative experience and meet the needs of all students in their care, despite their desire to do this, including meeting the needs of students who are gifted and talented. Such concerns may result in difficulty sustaining positive attitudes to teaching inclusively and negative attitudes may result in non-productive behaviours (Swain et al., 2012) adding a level of challenge for pre-service teachers. Regardless, providing for the needs of students is central to teachers' work and yet pre-service teachers feel that they have not had sufficient preparation in these elements to feel confident in the classroom (Swain et al., 2012; Troxclair, 2013).

Amid the challenges of what is considered to be teachers' work are the added management and administrative tasks, marketing, fund-raising, community advocacy and school policy-making that impacts on teacher's time in the classroom (Crump, 2005). Regardless of the specific skills taught during ITE and what is expected as part of the teaching role, it is critical that beginning teachers demonstrate a functional understanding of the socio-cultural context in which the teaching and learning occur in order to enhance student outcomes (Ogunniyi & Rollnick, 2015).

The Australian Government recognises that well trained and knowledgeable teachers provide a platform for a high-quality education system in Australia with quality teachers as a key driver of student outcomes (TEMAG, 2015). Day (2004) highlighted over a decade ago that a characteristic of school reformation is the development of measurable teaching competencies as a means of assessing teacher quality. Current changes to graduate teacher assessment processes in Australia are reflective of this and are aimed to increase the quality of graduate teachers (AITSL, 2017b). New requirements involve the accreditation of programs offered by ITE providers, rigorous selection for entry into ITE programs, improved and structured practical experience for teacher education students and robust assessment of graduates to ensure classroom readiness (TEMAG, 2015). These initiatives impact 450 programs— both undergraduate and post-graduate—offered by 48 Australian institutions. Alternate pathways such as Alternate Certification Programs (ACPs) are under review. Historically, some researchers suggest that no discernible difference in teacher effectiveness exists between those possessing an undergraduate qualification and an ACP qualification (Zeichner & Schulte, 2001). Subsequently Flores et al. (2004) reported a disparity existed in their investigations regarding the level of perceived self-efficacy, confidence and therefore success in early teaching experiences. Flores et al. (2004) revealed those with an ACP qualification reported feeling less classroom ready than others. However, it is agreed the production of confident, effective and highly qualified teachers does impact student learning

(Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). It is unknown whether participants in programs such as Teach for Australia feel a comparable sense of efficacy to their more mainstream ITE counterparts.

#### 2.9.1.2 Professional Experience (PE)

The traditional model of Professional Experience has remained unchanged for many years (Bullough et al., 2002) although conceptions of purpose and focus have evolved (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2009). The pre-service teacher is placed with a supervising colleague teacher for varying lengths of time. During this time the pre-service teacher works towards assuming increasing responsibility for aspects of the management and teaching of a class as quickly as possible in order to demonstrate the required competencies for assessment (Bullough, 2002; Childs & McNicholl, 2007; Fazio & Volante, 2011).

The provision of quality colleague teachers to support pre-service teachers in their practical learning is an added challenge for universities (Ingvarson, 2005). While both initial teacher preparation providers and schools share a commitment to invest in the profession, working in partnership is fraught with complexities and difficult relational issues that are often revealed during Professional Experience (Le Cornu, 2015; Phelan, McEwan, & Pateman, 1996). Professional Experience placements are often cited as the most highly valued component of initial teacher education program by pre-service teachers (Fazio & Volante, 2011) and yet many struggle to navigate them. Many pre-service teachers find difficulty in the school-based arrangements and the preparation and selection of quality colleague teachers that enable them to have successful teaching experiences (Ingvarson, 2005).

#### 2.9.1.3 Curriculum, assessment and reporting

Recruitment of quality teachers and their initial teacher preparation continues to be high on the political agenda. Dissatisfaction with the quality of graduate

teachers has for some time been of concern by employment bodies and principals (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Goe & Stickler, 2008; Harrell et al., 2004; Hattie, 2003a; Ingvarson, 2002, 2005; Ingvarson et al., 2006; Treagust et al., 2015). Universities and providers of ITE programs strive to provide the holistic approach needed to support pre-service teachers in their theoretical and practical teaching and learning. This requires a working partnership between the university and schools to provide quality practicum or Professional Experience opportunities that align with the theoretical teachings of the university, a task many universities are having difficulty in achieving (Bullough & Kauchak, 2010; Ingvarson, 2005; Long et al., 2012; Parker et al., 2012).

Pre-service teachers report insufficient teacher preparation with respect to the foundation of meeting the rigours of the teaching profession, for example, from creating effective learning spaces to working in partnership with parents (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Fazio & Volante, 2011; C. Gardner & Williamson, 2007; Ingvarson, 2005). Pre-service teachers that undertake programs that provide them with a deep understanding of what they are to help students learn, develop skills in determining students' prior knowledge, planning activities, and student assessment, and consider themselves well prepared for the realities of the classroom (Ingvarson, 2005). The value of theoretical professional preparation of classroom teachers is often questioned by pre-service teachers in light of the value of practical learning. Ingvarson (2005) found that although there is a broad variation in the quality of ITE programs, the value of them remains indisputable.

### 2.9.2 Professional structures

Table 12.

*Overview of the research relevant to professional structures.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Role of the colleague teacher** | (Brouwers & Tomic, 2010; Bullough & Kauchak, 2010; Bullough & Young, 2002; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005) |
| **Workplace environment** | (Bullough, 2002; Bullough et al., 2004; Carter & Francis, 2001; Ginns et al., 2001; P. Hudson, 2013; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010; Lang, 2001; Long et al., 2012; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Newman, 2010; Pietsch & Williamson, 2009; T. Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) |
| **Mentoring and staff support** | (Athanases et al., 2008; Bullough, 2005; Clarke & Sheridan, 2017; Ginns et al., 2001; Martinez, 2004; T. Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) |

Although Bullough (2002) noted that a belief exists that 'to teach is to work in isolation, to plan lessons alone, solve problems alone and to stand alone in front of the classroom and to talk at children' (p. 67), collaboration is critical to teacher success. It has been proposed that teachers with strong self-efficacy elicit support from colleagues and principals (Brouwers & Tomic, 2010). As Professional Experience is a highly valued and a formative component of initial teacher preparation, the dual role of the colleague teacher as a source of support and that of the assessor is critical to early teaching success (Bullough et al., 2003). Equally important is the partnership between schools and universities and the role they have in transforming schooling and teaching for both students and teachers (Bullough & Kauchak, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

The employment context (full-time, casual, contract) which graduate teachers find themselves in, plays a significant role in the successful development of their working knowledge base (Pietsch & Williamson, 2009). Using this knowledge base to promote successful outcomes for students is challenging in light of the demands of accountability for student performance. This accountability is a disturbing prospect for many graduate teachers with pressure to see their teaching quality directly reflected in student outcomes. Pre-service teachers face criticism and questions related to classroom readiness and teacher quality. Much of this negative discourse fails to acknowledge the complex realities of the classroom (Bullough, 2002).

These complexities of early career teaching are contextual in nature and impact on the success of the commencing teachers. This is often through the dominant values, beliefs, norms, ethos, behaviours and school routines reflected in the school culture. Graduate teachers embraced by supportive school cultures and learning environments that nurture students and teachers are better able to navigate the demands of the classroom (B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010). The mentoring and support offered in such schools

is critical to beginning teacher success (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Carter & Francis, 2001; P. Hudson, 2013; Long et al., 2012; T. Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

It is widely acknowledged that at least the first year of teaching is an important period in any teacher's professional growth (Ginns et al., 2001; Lang, 2001; McCormack & Thomas, 2003). Early school and classroom experiences may promote or inhibit the desire to commit to a long-term teaching career and successful experiences can contribute to developing positive self-efficacy. This may then translate to confidence in facing the perceived challenges of the profession such as planning and delivery of curriculum, assessment, reporting and behaviour management (Ginns et al., 2001).

Early experiences that leave beginning teachers feeling unsupported or unable to access support structures within their schools, may be detrimental to a beginning teacher's ongoing success (Lang, 2001; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Newman, 2010). This reportedly occurs in a number of curriculum areas and professional contexts, making success at this crucial time difficult to experience (Ginns et al., 2001). While some pre-service teachers may seek support actively through university mentors, colleague teachers and social media networks with peers (Hutchison, 2012), some beginning teachers may not be able to access such avenues for support. Although the provision of support is often afforded to permanent teachers in some schools through informal mentoring and participation in collegial activities which strengthen their position within the school community, casual teachers are rarely able to access these structures (Pietsch & Williamson, 2009). As many graduate teachers start their career in this fractured context, they are denied the required support at a time when it is most critical to their professional learning (Carter & Francis, 2001).

There are a number of ways in which beginning teachers may be supported. An investigation by Ginns et al. (2001) indicates that participating in action research during the first year of teaching may provide one means of supporting beginning

teachers and augment their professional growth. Other researchers in Australia and internationally have focused on the utilisation and success of teacher mentors (Athanases et al., 2008; Bullough, 2005; Clarke & Sheridan, 2017; P. Hudson, 2013; Hutchison, 2012; Long et al., 2012; Martinez, 2004; T. Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Lang (2001) determined that collaborative planning with experienced teachers, supportive colleague teacher relationships and strong organisation and time management skills enhanced the development of efficacy in beginning teachers.

### 2.9.3 Professional culture

Table 13.

*Overview of the research relevant to professional culture.*

| Literature topic | Author/s, Year |
|---|---|
| **Student, staff and parent relationships** | (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Carter & Francis, 2001; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, & Hunter, 2010; A. Peralta, 2005; Rhodes, Nevill, et al., 2004; Spilt et al., 2011; Stoddard et al., 2011) |
| **Professional development** | (Ballou, 2003; Bond, 2011; Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Chow, Chu, Tavares, & Lee, 2015; Cochran-Smith et al., 2013; DeLuca, 2012; Ginns et al., 2001; Hopkins et al., 1997; McCormack et al., 2006; Pietsch & Williamson, 2009; Rhodes, Nevill, et al., 2004; Sutherland et al., 2006; J. White & Moss, 2003) |

The school-based interactions between teachers, students and staff form the basis of teacher's social networks. Positive relationships in the school setting enhance teacher resilience as they promote a sense of belonging, acceptance and wellbeing, nurture professional growth and encourage collective ownership and accountability (B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010). Many studies scrutinize the importance of teacher-student relationships from the perspective of children, however little is known of how these relationships impact the professional and personal lives of teachers.

In addition to teacher-student relationships is the rapport between teachers and parents and teachers and colleagues. These relationships and how teachers process the experiences and emotions associated with these can impact significantly teachers' wellbeing (B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010; Spilt et al., 2011). School-based cultures that promote friendly staff relationships where individuals' efforts are recognised, good working relationships with administration and leadership staff are enhanced and in which teachers feel valued are important (Rhodes, Neville, et al., 2004). Equally, school cultures that promote family participation is a child's education produces significantly improved outcomes. Positive family involvement can lead to increased attendance, enhanced behaviour, and higher student achievement (Stoddard et al., 2011).

The transition from pre-service teacher to a full member of the professional teaching community is complex (Sutherland et al., 2006). This transition involves the acquisition of required competencies and a redefining of the image of themselves as members of the teaching community of practice (Sutherland et al., 2006), an important part of which is to continue to develop and grow in the profession.

The provision of ongoing and meaningful opportunities for professional development or professional learning is essential for the advancement of teachers' pedagogical expertise during a lifelong process (Chow et al., 2015). Early, targeted

professional development that meets the needs of graduate teachers has the potential to increase self-confidence, motivation and commitment to teaching (Rhodes, Neville, et al., 2004).

Professional development and formal mentoring programs are not always offered in schools. J. White and Moss (2003) emphasise the importance of informal authentic professional conversations and their role in professional development, improved practices and student outcomes as beginning teachers benefit from the thinking and sharing with experienced colleagues. This productive collaboration can be contextualised within the school and collegial sharing can be encouraged and supported by school leadership (Rhodes, Neville, et al., 2004).

Pietsch and Williamson (2009) documented that a lack of support, access to professional development opportunities and the inability to develop continuity in the growth of teaching skills for those who begin teaching without permanency, impacts beginning teachers' levels of commitment to the profession after the first year of teaching. Beginning teachers that had secured full-time permanent teaching developed a strong sense of identity as their competency progressed and their confidence in their capacity to teach became apparent (Pietsch & Williamson, 2009).

Limited attention has been afforded to teacher leadership as an area of professional learning (Bond, 2011). Although professional development is rarely offered to casual or short-term staff in the school setting (Pietsch & Williamson, 2009), Bond (2011) sees it best placed within initial teacher education programs which, "under the guidance of knowledgeable teacher educators, are ideal places to introduce the concept [of leadership] and begin to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions [of future leaders]" (p. 281).

## 2.10 Summary

The pathway to teaching for career-change pre-service teachers is complex and unique to the individual. However, career-changers are united by their need for substantial change in the orientation of their lives. These pre-service teachers enter a dynamic contemporary professional context and contribute significantly to the current teaching workforce. Better understanding the demographics of those entering the profession allows for more targeted and effective recruitment, preparation and retention processes. The identification of the intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic rewards of teaching that appeal to those considering teaching as a career option can be emphasised and the personal and professional challenges navigated throughout the ITE process and beyond. Although literature exists that identifies some of the pragmatic elements of transitioning into the teaching profession, little exists that considers the role of pre-service teacher beliefs, perceptions and motivations for teaching and how these factors impact emerging professional identity in pre-service teachers. Research that draws together an understanding of the pre-service and graduate teacher and understanding of motivations and influences in light of professional teaching contexts is critical in not only attracting quality teachers but retaining them in the profession.

This chapter has provided a review of the literature pertinent to pre-service and graduate teacher experience. It presents a context for the study and provides a conceptual framework for interpreting the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. The research approach and methodology, project design, instrument development and data collection and analysis methods extend from these literature fields and are outlined in the following chapter.

# Chapter 3

# Methodology

## 3.1 Introduction

The review of the literature presented in Chapter 2 sheds light on the key areas of the teaching profession as they relate to the overarching aims and research questions of this study to explore the preconceptions, understandings and beliefs held by pre-service teachers regarding the teaching profession.

In this chapter, an overview of the research approach and design are presented with the research aims and questions clearly identified. A detailed description of each phase of the study is provided, as is the process of ethical approval and considerations for the research. The process of instrument design, the selection of the sample and the project timeline are defined. This chapter also includes the methods by which reliability was upheld throughout data collection, organisation and analysis phases of the study (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2008; Denscombe, 2009).

## 3.2 Philosophical foundation of the study

The philosophical foundation of the study continually shaped the nature of the investigation. The methods employed, the research questions developed and the ways in which data were interpreted, were shaped by considerations of the ontology, the epistemology and the paradigm (Crotty, 1998; Denscombe, 2009).

When considering the nature of social reality, it was this researcher's belief that the social phenomena central to the study were not separate to the lived experience of the researcher or the pre-service teacher participants but rather 'a creation of the human mind - a reality that is constructed through people's perceptions and reinforced by their interaction with other people' (Denscombe, 2009, p.119). Crotty (1998), proposes that the associations people attribute to the lived experiences, allow meaning to be created. In believing this to be true, the ontological view may appear as one of a constructionist, acknowledging the variability between cultures, different groups and comprising of '*multiple realities*' (Denscombe, 2009, p. 119). Correspondingly, the way in which the pre-service teachers made sense of their experiences presents as '*Interpretivism'*, where importance was placed on interpreting the world in order to understand it, knowing that complete objectivity is not possible (Denscombe, 2009, p. 121). Equally, this research was informed by a phenomenological orientation, where the participants' interpretations of experience spoke to the essence of how they saw themselves and how they understood this period of their life during great change and growth (Adams & van Manen, 2017; Crotty, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Additionally, there were practical drivers shaping this study. Placing an emphasis on the rewards, challenges and beliefs associated with pre-service teaching reflected the researcher's desire to better understand how to support and retain pre-service and beginning teachers into the future. This in, and of, itself may be considered to comply with the epistemological assumption of '*pragmatism*' (Denscombe, 2009, p. 129), and in doing so lend this study to a mixed-method paradigm.

Using these multiple and complementary lenses, this research sought to understand the preconceptions and beliefs that pre-service teachers held regarding the teaching profession. Through the data collection instruments employed, the pre-service teachers were able to document their experiences in the context of their personal and professional settings. The researcher's aim was to then 'make sense' of these experiences and their changing perceptions (Babbie, 2013).

## 3.3 Research Approach

This research project was developed on the basis that 'research questions drive the choice of a specific mixed-methods design, sampling procedures, and data analysis techniques' (Plano Clark & Baidee, 2010, p. 278). Four central research questions were developed within a modified case study, utilising a 'triangulation mixed-method design' (Creswell, 2008, p. 557). By collecting and integrating both quantitative and qualitative data, the value of this mixed method study is greatly enhanced (Fetters, Curry & Creswell, 2013).

## 3.4 Research Questions

Figures 2 to 5 illustrate the narrowing of the research focus from the overarching research aim to the objectives of the study and the resulting Research Questions 1 to 4.

**Research Question 1**


*Figure 2*. Connections between aim, objectives, Research Question 1 and data collection instruments.

This question sought to examine the demographic and preferential data obtained from the study. The question was to provide insight of the cohort in relation to their background such as age, gender, highest qualifications obtained prior to enrolment in the B. Teach programs and previous fields of work. It also sought the then current preferences for future employment – preferred teaching locations, anticipated year levels to teach within, subject specialities, preferred school types (urban, rural, or city), and preferred school systems, such as Public, Catholic or Independent. This background information will be utilised to construct a profile of the participants in

order to better understand their personal and professional context. The response to Research Question 1 provided a benchmark against which any changes in perceptions, explored in Research Question 4, could be measured.

### Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was to investigate the initial perception of the individual's understanding of workplace conditions, opportunities and professional expectations and aspirations of the teaching profession. It addressed the initial perceptions of the individual in regard to their professional motivations which inspired them to embark on becoming a teacher.

The question sought the understanding of the pre-service teacher related to required competencies for successful classroom teaching and how they saw themselves in the teaching role. It also provided information about the pre-service teachers own concept of 'teacher' and the development of their own professional identity.


*Figure 3.* Connections between aim, objectives, Research Question 2 and data collection instruments.

**Research Question 3**

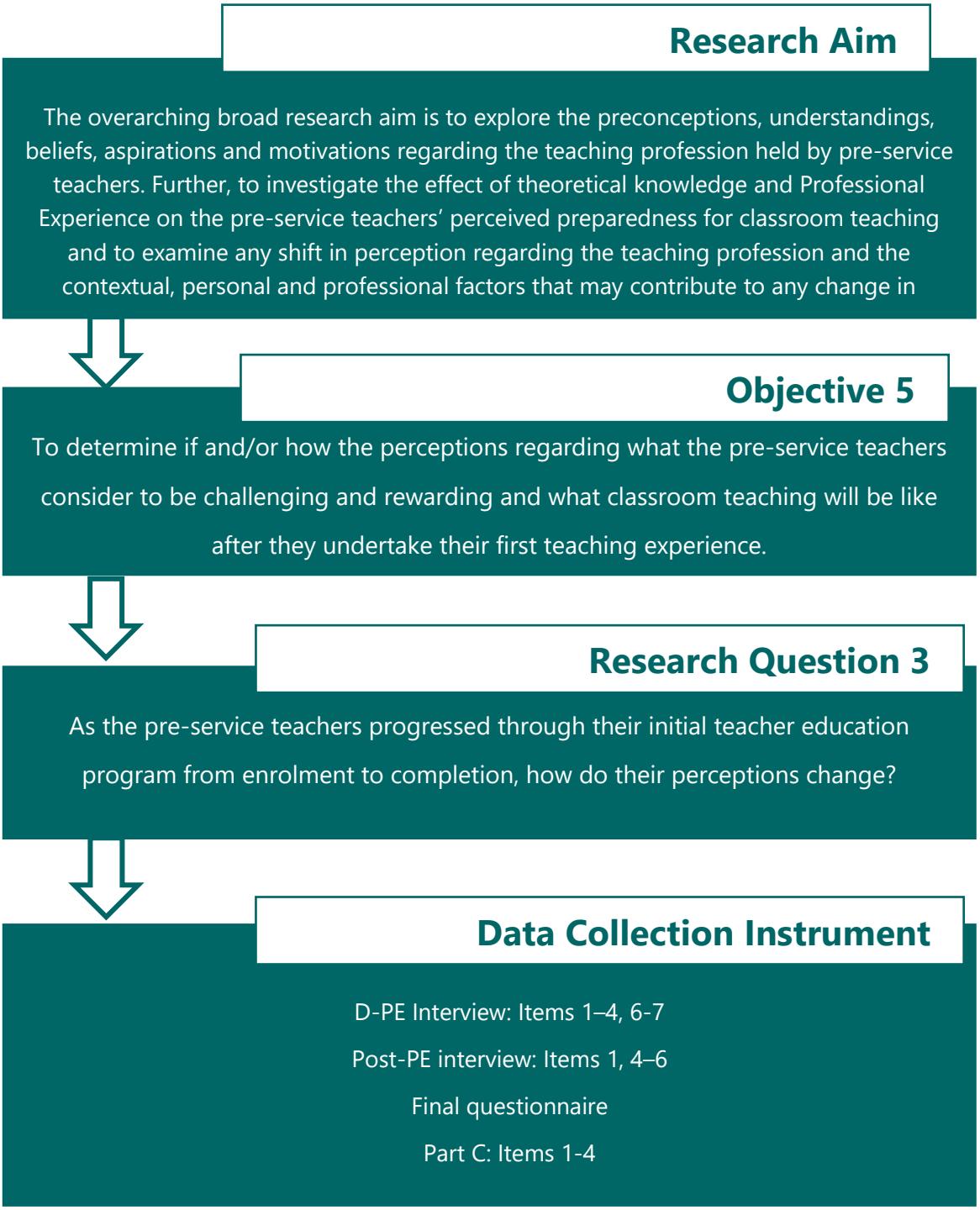



*Figure 4*. Connections between aim, objectives, Research Question 3 and data collection instruments.

In investigating Research Question 3, this study looked specifically to reveal new insights into what changes in pre-service teachers understanding, perceptions and beliefs regarding the teaching profession had occurred. It also sought to compare 'before' and 'after' views of the pre-service teachers as well as identify the personal and professional factors which influenced change, giving contextual insight to the changes experienced.

**Research Question 4**

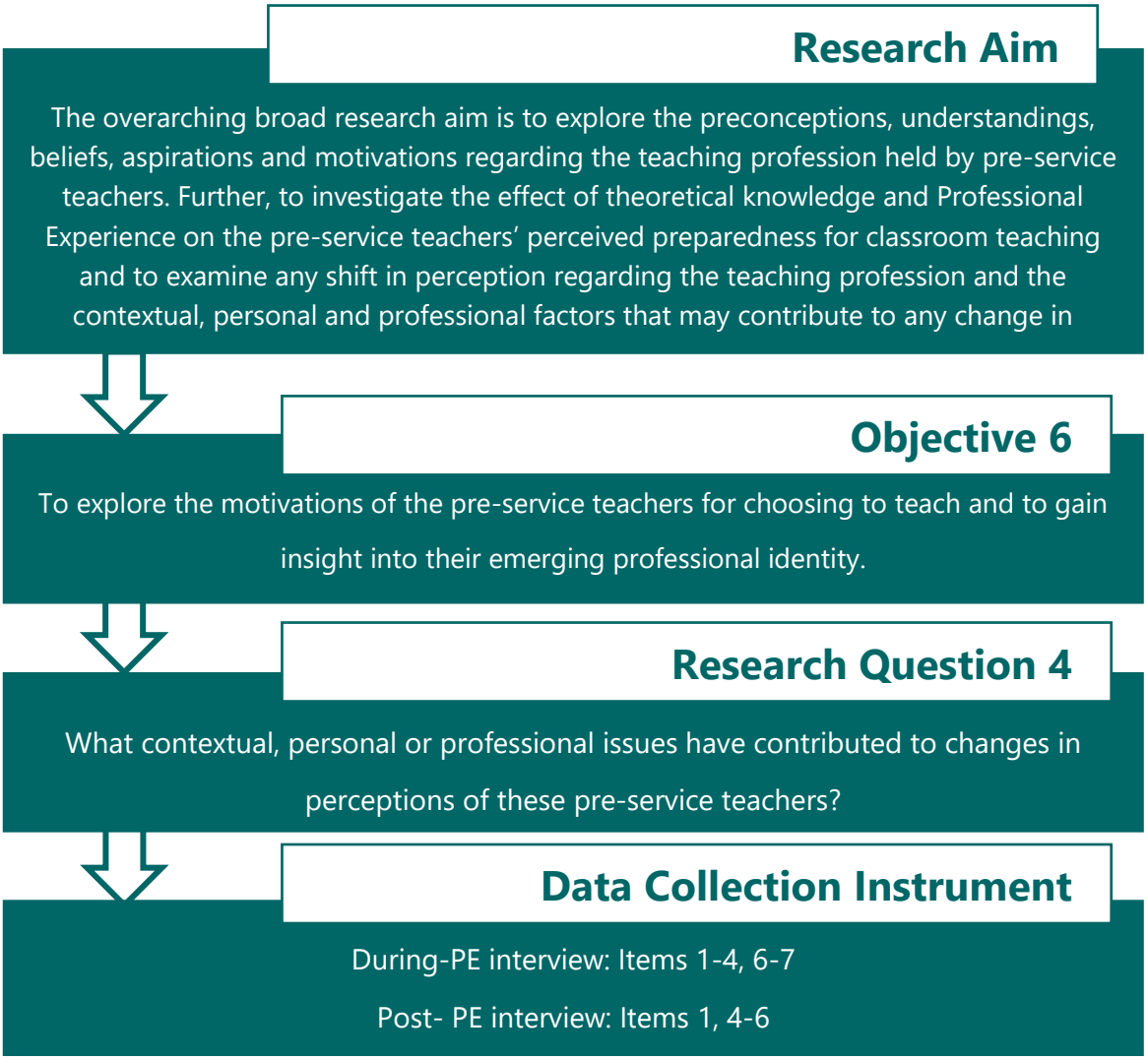



*Figure 5.* Connections between aim, objectives, Research Question 4 and data collection instruments.

In examining this question, the data analyses provided information about a range of personal and professional factors related to the context of preparing to become a teacher. The question sought to elicit the personal reflections of the pre-service teachers regarding their motivations for choosing to teach as well as the personal responses to the nature of classroom teaching in Australian schools. The study closely investigated the professional elements within the context of changing perceptions.

In addition to the synthesis and development of professional identity, this question examined the impact of the practical, in-school experiences in relation to the efficacy of the pre-service teacher and the preparation for the experience by the University. The quality of the Professional Experience, the skills of the colleague teacher, and the reward/challenge balance also were explored.

### 3.5 Mixed-method modified case study approach

Consistent with the definitions of mixed-methods outlined by Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007), the word 'methods' was taken to be a broad term inclusive of the strategies, methods of research and philosophical underpinnings. The selection of a mixed-methods approach was considered to provide a better understanding of the research questions and the pre-service teachers' lived experience than either a quantitative or a qualitative approach could do independently (Creswell, 2008; Fetters et al., 2013). Traditional methods of research incorporate 'objectivity, reliability, generality and reductionism' (Burns, 2000, p. 4), and it is implied within this paradigm that 'truth' is fixed and that only such an approach can promote a factual view of the participants' reality (Babbie, 2014, p. 43). Despite the significant contribution quantitative data make to the understanding of phenomena, it was the consideration and philosophical stance of this researcher that the human experience 'cannot be subsumed within numerical classification' (Burns, 2000, p.11), and as such, a rich and more holistic approach to understanding the pre-service teacher experience was required and sought (Denscombe, 2009).

The mixed-method design of the study facilitated the recording and making meaning of the lived experiences of the pre-service teachers in order to develop depth of understanding. As Burns (2000, p. 388) stated;

> 'Only qualitative methods, such as participation, observation and unstructured interviewing, permit access to individual meaning in the context of ongoing daily life. The qualitative researcher is not concerned with objective truth, but rather with the truth as the informant perceives it'.

The design of this study was not constrained by a singular approach but rather harnessed the attributes of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis to create a rich and authentic depiction of the beliefs and experiences of the participants. Use of a mixed-methods approach allowed for pre-service teachers to express their perceptions of what being a classroom teacher encompassed. This approach allowed them to share their own professional aspirations with the subjectivity of the individual that honoured the personal metaphor for teaching unimpeded by categories or numerical identifiers.

The longitudinal nature of the study allowed for the researcher to observe the pre-service teachers from enrolment to completion of their B. Teach program, ready to commence their new career as qualified educators. The development of and changes in perceptions experienced by the pre-service teachers were able to be recorded, compared, expanded and understood as the interplay between quantitative and qualitative methods captured their evolution (Fetters et al., 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In this way, the voice of the pre-service teachers resonated throughout the study as they described in their own words some of the personal, professional or contextual issues that led to changing or changed perceptions.

The relevance and applicability of the research questions were fundamental to the process of designing this study, particularly in the decision to utilise a mixed methods approach (Charmaz, 2015, 2016; Plano Clark and Baidee, 2010). Although

final versions of instruments were required to be submitted for ethics approval prior to the commencement of the study, semi-structured interview questions left space to explore ideas and thoughts expressed by participants during this phase of qualitative data collection. These semi-structured interviews also created the scope to expand and reflect on the quantitative questionnaire responses of individuals, creating an appreciation of pre-service teachers' intentions and of who they were as pre-service teachers. The guiding statements prompting questions presented at interview allowed for each conversation to pursue spoken thoughts and themes raised by the participants. The researcher used clarifying, probing and prompting questions to assist each participant to explore and expand upon their thinking as well as to assist the researcher in exploring what incidentally emerged for them and within each participant cohort. This served to confirm interpretations of the data with the participants as well as to improve understanding in preparation for subsequent analysis (Creswell, 2008).

This approach is consistent with the Charmaz (2016) definition of constructivist grounded theory where she argued that research design incorporates strategies that allow for exploration of what the researcher discovers as the study unfolds. It was suggested that such a methodology would be suitable for capturing the inner perspectives of educators in a context that is a complex and changing field of action (Charmaz, 2015, 2016; Creswell, 2008).

### 3.6 Role of the researcher

It is the role of the researcher in all social research to extend respect to their participants (Denscombe, 2009) and, in doing so, act professionally and ethically in research. 'Qualitative researchers bring their methodological backgrounds, biographies, perspectives, and standpoints…to their research' (Charmaz, 2016, p. 1611) and they use these to interpret their world (Denscombe, 2009); therefore, the role of the researcher in this study and their preconceptions were carefully critiqued alongside interpretations of the participants and their data. The principal aim throughout this study was to gather, analyse and interpret the data through a lens of

interpretivism, producing credible and accurate interpretations and accounts that were acknowledged as such by the participants.

The researchers' 18 years of classroom experience and subsequent reflexivity meant that there was a tangible risk of misinterpretation or observation being guided by well-established priorities (Finlay, 2002). This reflexivity could not be eliminated however the researcher's status and awareness of being both an insider, generating perspectives when having made the same transition into teaching, and as an outsider, of a researcher applying theoretical lenses to lived experience, enhanced interpretations and ensured the impact was negligible (Crotty, 1998; Denscombe, 2009). Consequently, the researcher's experience provided greater insight into the pre-service teacher experience and provided additional opportunities to interrogate the data through a reflexive approach. Moving dialectically between experience and awareness allowed for data interpretation to recognise elements of the pre-service teacher's context and responses that may have otherwise been missed (Finlay, 2002).

As the relationship between participant and researcher spanned a two-year study period, it was essential that the initial interview provided a platform to build rapport in an informal and relaxed, yet professional environment. This was important in order to support and encourage participants to express their thoughts, perceptions, and beliefs comfortably and honestly. The initial interview was the first opportunity to establish the foundations of a relationship of trust and openness. This was critical to the overall success of the overall, given that participants had just commenced their ITE programs at the time of this first interaction. These initial interactions were intentionally characterised by respectful relationships between the researcher and the pre-service teachers which enabled the establishment of enduring interactions and for the arrangement of appropriate and mutually convenient data collection times (Denscombe, 2009).

## 3.7 Ethics approval

As the research involved the study of human subjects it was necessary to seek approval from the University of Tasmania's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) prior to contacting potential participants. The Committee granted formal approval for the project as a minimal risk application in 2006 (Approval No. H0009170).

## 3.8 Participant Sample

The study used a criterion-based or purposive sampling technique (Gall et al., 2007). The selection of subjects was both typical and convenient (Burns, 2000). The study was effectively a 'bounded system' (Burns, 2000, pp. 476-477) where subjects were enrolled in the B. Teach program at the University of Tasmania, aiming to enter classroom teaching, and completing their program and working in the time frame allowed for by the study. Studying pre-service teachers during the program of their study allowed for easy access to individuals whilst they attended the Launceston campus. This was advantageous as addressing the cohort in relation to the study was easily co-ordinated during a scheduled lecture or tutorial where attendance was high. The campus also provided appropriate facilities in which to conduct interviews and maintain email contact with participants by utilising the University's internal email system. The structured nature of the pre-service teacher's program made planning and scheduling for the research study convenient.

### 3.8.1 Participant Recruitment and Selection

Following a meeting between the researcher's PhD supervisory team and University staff who had contact with commencing students throughout Orientation Week activities, the researcher arranged a time to address the cohort of incoming first-year B. Teach pre-service teachers. Another cohort of second-year pre-service teachers was also identified and selected for participation and separate arrangements were made to share project information with them.

These two cohorts of pre-service teachers were recruited simultaneously as this allowed for identification and exploration of the commonalities in their demographic and preferential profiles as well as their preconceptions and beliefs regarding the teaching profession. This also provided the researcher insights into participants' developing perceptions after a year in the ITE program and how these responses to pre-service teaching were evident when contrasted against those of commencing pre-service teachers.

An information sheet for participants and a statement of informed consent were provided to potential recruits (Appendices A and B). The sharing of information at this time ensured that decisions relating to participation were made with informed understandings about what was required, the types of data being collected and how this data would be used (Denscombe, 2009). Consent forms were stored separately from data collection instruments and collected data to ensure the confidentiality of participants. Participants, who agreed to participate in the second stage of the study provided additional consent, including contact information to allow the researcher to make direct contact.

Participants were allocated pseudonyms which were used as their particular identifiers throughout data collection and analysis including the final questionnaire, ensuring participant anonymity (Creswell, 2008; Denscombe, 2009). All identifying information was not sought and/or was removed from the initial and final questionnaires, classroom visits, weekly journals and interview material obtained during and/or after Professional Experience placements. All school-based details remained de-identified, including that of all school-based staff. A master document of participant names, contacts and assigned pseudonyms was securely stored within the university as password protected files, in accordance with ethics approval guidelines until all necessary data collection had taken place and then this document was destroyed (Creswell, 2008; Denscombe, 2009).

Participants were previously unknown to the researcher and it was emphasised that participation was voluntary and in no way connected to academic results or program expectations to ensure that consent was not granted under duress or persuasion (Denscombe, 2009). Throughout the preparation, data collection and analysis phases, the researcher determined that privacy and anonymity were of the greatest importance for participants and any schools they became associated with throughout their ITE programs. It was emphasised at each data collection point that participants could withdraw from the study at any time and any data provided by them would be removed from the study if they requested this to be done.

### 3.9 Data Collection

The initial questionnaire and the Pre-Professional Experience interviews were conducted on-site at the Newnham Campus of the University of Tasmania. Interviews scheduled during participants' Professional Experience placements or during classroom observations were conducted in the school where these activities were being undertaken. Arrangements to collect data in situ were negotiated directly between pre-service teacher and the researcher in these instances. This did not require additional ethics clearance as this was merely a change in location of activity rather than a shift in focus. For some participants, the classroom observation visit was a convenient time to conduct the Professional Experience interview. Nevertheless, care was required to anticipate the sensitive nature of some of their responses and their concerns about this information being shared on site and to have this information recorded.

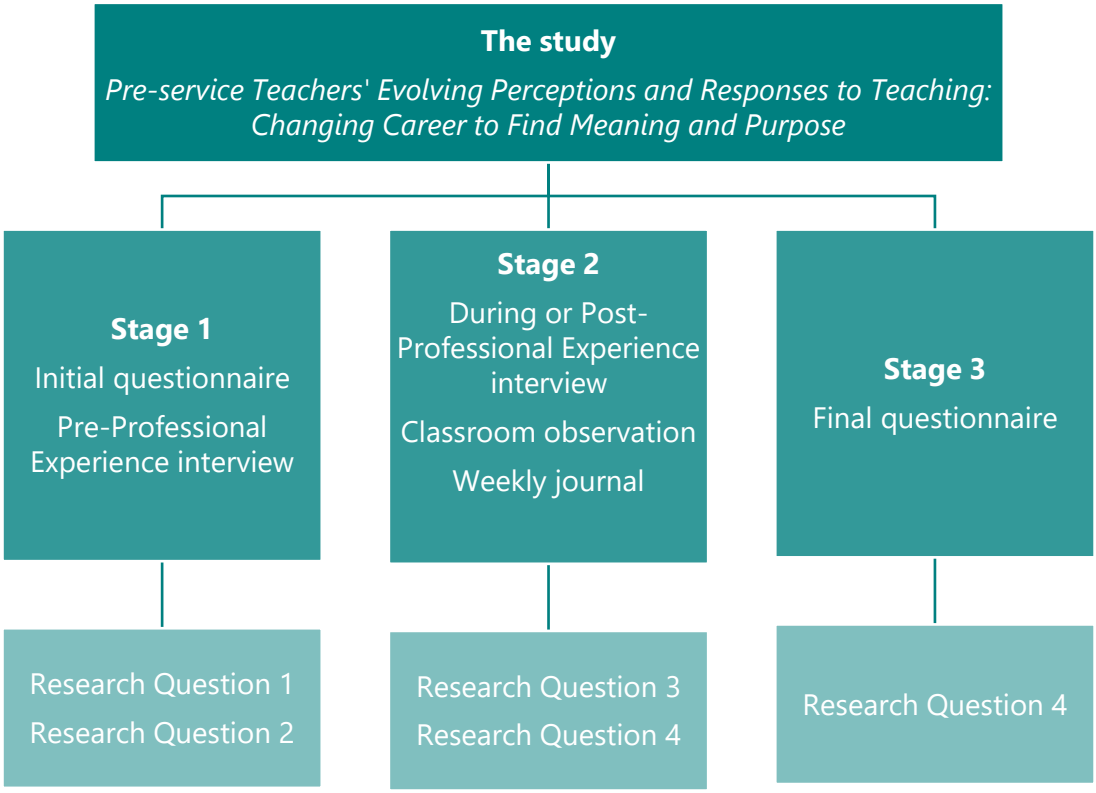



*Figure 6.* Research question alignment with the stage of the study.

### 3.10 Reliability and validity

The reliability of the data collected in this study is dependent upon a number of factors and the types of instruments used in the collection of data. The quantitative questionnaires were administered once each as a single version of the instrument (Creswell, 2008). Prior to the finalisation of the questionnaire instruments, all negative wording within the individual scale items (Part B, Questionnaire 1, items 1-38) were reversed to ensure accurate analysis using Cronbach's coefficient alpha, as a measure of internal reliability (Bryman & Cramer, 1994; Burns, 2000; Field, 2009; Pallant, 2005). As the points within each scale were less than ten, a lower Cronbach's coefficient alpha result was anticipated. However, a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.773 was recorded confirming that the items and scales were considered internally reliable (Pallant, 2005).

Content validity of non-numerical data was addressed by assessing the appropriateness of research questions to capture appropriate data (Creswell, 2008). This was developed through consultation with colleagues and experts in the field of educational research. This process was supported by the use of contemporary literature to support the priorities of the community of educational researchers who shared a consensus about which questions were most conducive to the central research questions (Morgan, 2014). The researcher's own professional knowledge of working with and mentoring both pre-service and beginning teachers in school contexts also contributed to this process. In this way, the researcher sought to ensure construct validity by utilising multiple sources of evidence (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2008).

The authenticity of the qualitative data was sought through research methods that promoted the gathering of rich perspectives, lived experiences, developing insights and influential responses of pre-service teachers. These elaborations on experiences and responses to teaching and teaching contexts were consistently repeated over time and across the cohorts. Equally, the reliability of qualitative instruments was inextricably linked to the rigour of interpretation and representation of data in precise recording, exact transcription, refined coding drawn directly from the data and member-checking for accuracy. The consistency of interpretation and analysis was maintained through all interviews, coding and analysis being conducted by the researcher (Babbie, 2013) after establishing the trustworthiness of interpretations throughout early data collection and analysis.

The triangulated mixed-method design of this study ensured that both quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously, merged and evaluated to respond to the four Research Questions (Creswell, 2008). Both the reliability and internal validity of the questionnaire, interview, classroom observation and weekly journal data were strengthened by the triangulated research design (Burns, 2000) as each of the instruments reflected multiple perspectives of pre-service teacher experience.

### 3.11 Project timeline

The research design dictated that data were collected through the use of four different data collection instruments: questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, classroom observations and weekly journals (Babbie, 2013; Burns, 2000), involving one cohort of enrolled students, studied longitudinally over the two-year duration (2007 – 2008) of the B. Teach program at the University of Tasmania and one, opportunistically sampled cohort in their second-year of the same B. Teach program.

Table 13 Chronological process of data collection, organisation and analysis, illustrates the extended period over which the study and its components were conducted. The initial processes and procedures commenced in July of 2006 and consisted of a combination of project management tasks including exploration of the background literature, development of research design, and preparation of final versions of the research instruments and ethics approval. Organisation of scheduling for presentations for potential participants and data collection opportunities were arranged during this period prior to the commencement of the 2007 semester.

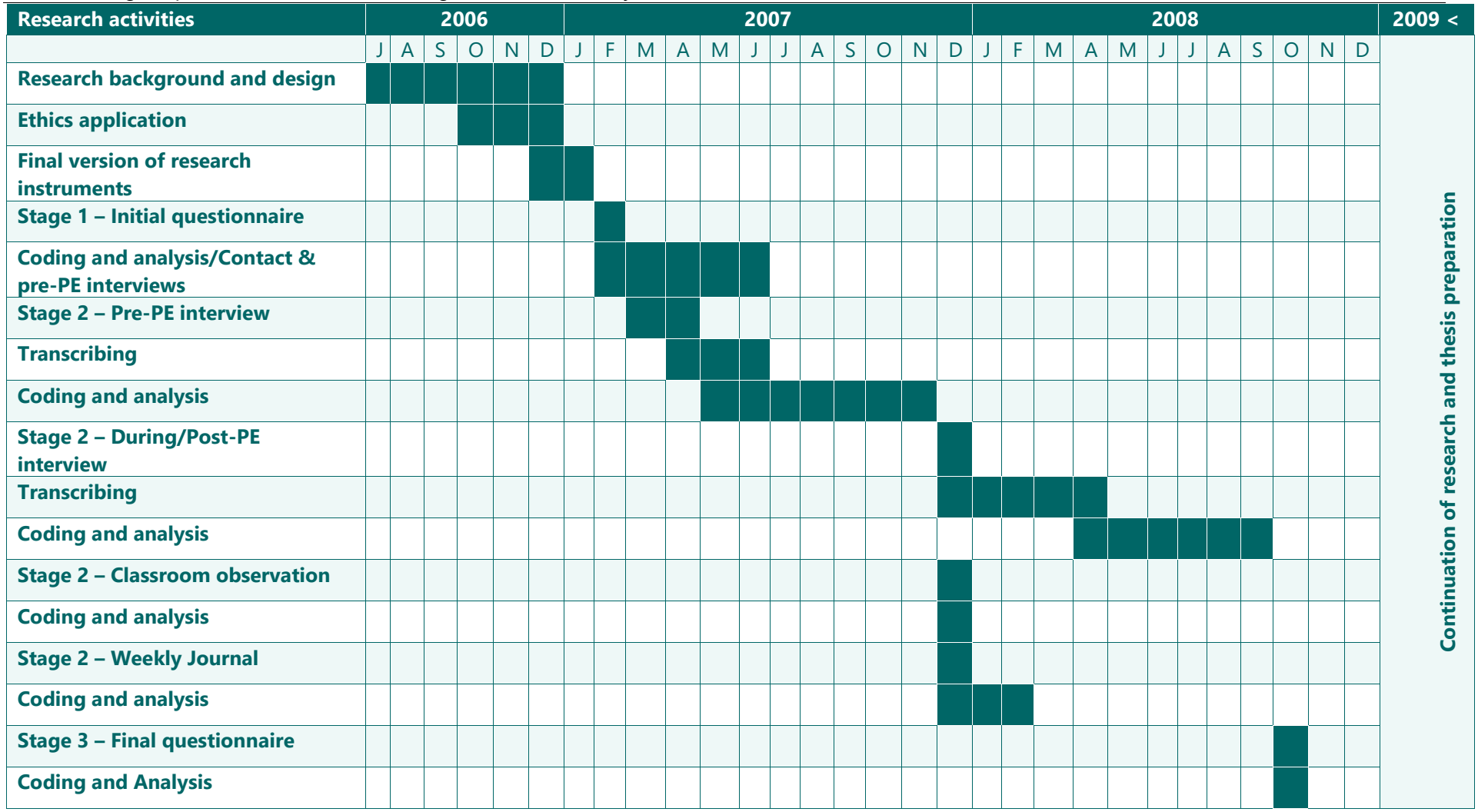
Given the time-sensitive nature of the research, the project timeline required that coding and analysis of the initial questionnaire and conducting, transcribing and analysis of the Pre-Professional Experience interviews occurred concurrently rather than in a linear mode as did the During-Professional Experience (During-PE) or Post-Professional Experience (Post-PE) interviews, classroom observations and weekly journal analysis.

Data were collected at the key, specified times throughout the study: upon commencement of studies; During- Professional Experience (During-PE) or Post-Professional Experience (Post-PE); and, at the completion of the program. Table 14 shows the administrative period 2006 through to thesis preparation after data collection and analysis. The Stage 1 phase of the study provided initial questionnaire data and allowed for the identification of pre-service teachers willing to continue in the study and permitted email and phone contact to be made. Pre-Professional

Experience interviews (Pre-PE) were arranged and conducted during March and April of 2007. During this period, coding and analysis of the initial questionnaire data occurred concurrently. At the conclusion of Pre-PE interviews, analogue recordings were sent for transcription to digital format. Upon their return, coding and analysis commenced and continued until November 2007. In December 2007 first-year participants undertook Professional Experience and at this time classroom observations were made, completion of weekly journals occurred, and During-PE interviews were conducted. Post-PE interviews were conducted immediately after the conclusion of Professional Experience as coding and analysis of weekly journals commenced. These data were then sent for transcription and was followed by coding and analysis from April 2008 to September of the same year. Early October concluded the academic year and the B. Teach program for the pre-service teachers participating in the study. Final questionnaires were administered to the cohort at this time and coding and analysis continued through to December 2008.

Table 14.

*The chronological process of data collection, organisation and analysis.*



## 3.12 Research design

Strauss & Corbin (1998) call for those undertaking qualitative studies, to maintain an "openness and willingness to listen and to 'give voice' to respondents…It means hearing what others have to say, seeing what others do, and representing these as accurately as possible" (p.43). It is the idea of 'hearing what others have to say' and 'seeing what others do' that underpins the design of this research.

The study adopted a three-stage scheme utilising a combination of both quantitative and qualitative strategies (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2008). This design necessitated the collection of data using four different data collection instruments: questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations and journal writing. This allowed for triangulation of the information obtained and cross-checking of the participants' responses (Creswell, 2008; Gall et al., 2007). These instruments produced corresponding sets of qualitative and quantitative data that required methods that would allow for analysis within and between data sets (Burns, 2000; Field, 2009; Pallant, 2005).

### 3.12.1 Stage 1

The Stage One initial questionnaire addressed both Research Questions 1 and 2.

**Research Question 1**

*What are the demographic and preferential profiles of pre-service teachers enrolled in the Bachelor of Teaching Degree at the University of Tasmania?*

**Research Question 2**

*What are the initial perceptions, understandings, and beliefs of pre-service teachers about being a classroom teacher and their own professional motivations and aspirations?*

The initial contact with students was made in the form of an information session presentation regarding the study. During this initial session, students were presented

with the Stage 1 initial questionnaire as well as an invitation to participate in the qualitative component of the study. Those wishing to participate in Stage 2 of the study provided their contact information at this time.

The Stage 1 initial questionnaire comprised three sections which sought to gather information on the demographics and preferences of the cohort (Part A), future teaching intentions, then current perceptions of the profession and their beliefs (Part B). In addition, the questionnaire presented participants with an opportunity to nominate what they considered to be the three most challenging and three most rewarding aspects of teaching for them as well as their beliefs about the teaching profession (Part C). The variety of responses obtained from the initial questionnaire were recoded and analysed to expose commonalities and indicators of professional identity consistent with the aim of Research Question 2.

### 3.12.2 Stage 2

The Stage 2 qualitative phase included the Pre-Professional Experience (Pre-PE) interview, During-Professional Experience (During-PE) or Post-Professional Experience (Post-PE) interview, classroom observation, and weekly journal, which addressed Research Questions 3 and 4.

**Research Question 3**

*As the pre-service teachers progressed through their initial teacher education program from enrolment to completion, how do their perceptions change?*

**Research Question 4**

*What contextual, personal or professional issues have contributed to changes in perceptions of these pre-service teachers?*

Participants were contacted to arrange interview times that were mutually agreeable and, subsequently, the initial face-to-face interviews were conducted at the University's Newnham campus during March and April 2007.

Stage 2 participants were invited to keep a daily log during Professional Experience to assist in the collection of data which was used to map their responses to the personal and professional aspects of teaching. These participants were observed during a teaching session whilst in their school placement and interviewed again either during Professional Experience or immediately after.

### 3.12.3 Stage 3

**Stage 3**

The third and final stage of the study comprised the final questionnaire and addressed Research Question 4.

**Research Question 4**

*What contextual, personal or professional issues have contributed to changing perceptions of these pre-service teachers?*

The second questionnaire was administered to all pre-service teachers, from the first-year cohort, who were present on the final day of formal classes for their program at its conclusion in October 2008.

The final questionnaire presented items similar to those of the initial Stage 1 questionnaire to allow for comparison of data. However, the Stage 3 questionnaire also sought information regarding the effectiveness of the integration of theory to practice and the self-perception of the pre-service teachers' preparedness to teach.

## 3.13 Data collection

By working in partnership with the university it was possible to secure a short period of time to address the prospective first-year participants during information sessions as part of orientation week, February of 2007 and second-year pre-service teachers during a scheduled core class the following week. After a Powerpoint (Microsoft Office, 2007) presentation outlining the study and an invitation to participate in one or more of the three stages of data collection, participants were provided with an

information sheet, the initial questionnaire and a consent form for Stages 1 and 2. A letter of invitation also was supplied highlighting that participation in the study was completely optional with no penalty imposed for non-involvement or withdrawal at any stage during the study.

Consent and contact forms were attached to each of the initial questionnaires. Those wishing to participate in the questionnaire but did not wish to be involved further detached their consent form when submitting their questionnaire to the researcher. Those wishing to be contacted, assigned a pseudonym and left their consent form attached so that the questionnaire could be aligned with future data.

As all questionnaires were administered and collected on a single day, coding and analysis were commenced immediately and continued over the following five-month period. During this time recruited participants were contacted directly to arrange interview times that were mutually agreeable, and subsequently, these interviews were conducted at the University of Launceston campus during March and April 2007. Simultaneously, the Stage 1 initial questionnaire was coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 14 and later PASW Statistics GradPack 18 software programs (SPSS Inc., 2009). Coding and analysis of this data took place over the eight months between May and December. Professional Experience was scheduled for December 2007 and at this time, During-Professional Experience or Post-Professional Experience interviews, classroom observations, and weekly journal data collection took place. Transcribing of interview recordings, data entry of any collected weekly journals from participants was prepared for data entry into Nvivo 8 (QSR International, 2008) and later Nvivo 9 (QSR International, 2009) coding and analysis. Transcribing of interview recordings continued through to April 2008 with classroom observation data and weekly journals being coded and analysed at this time. Coding and analysis of the interview material were concluded in September. Prior to the graduation of this cohort of pre-service teachers, the Stage 3 final questionnaire was presented to all students in attendance on the last formal day of their program. This occurred in October of 2008

followed by a three-month analysis period. From the commencement of 2009, research and thesis preparation continued. See Table 15.

Table 15.

*Data collection instruments and type of data collected within each stage of the study.*

| Stage | Instrument | Type of data |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | Initial Questionnaire | **Quantitative** – Tick-a-box, Likert scale responses<br>**Qualitative** – Open-ended and short answer responses |
| **2** | Pre-Professional Experience Interview | **Qualitative** – Interview transcripts |
| **2** | During or Post-Professional Experience Interview | **Qualitative** – Interview transcripts |
| **2** | Classroom observation | **Qualitative** – Checklist confirmation notes |
| **2** | Weekly Journal | **Qualitative** – Subjective narrative and reflective writing |
| **3** | Final Questionnaire | **Quantitative** – Tick-a-box, Likert scale responses<br>**Qualitative** – Open-ended and short answer responses |

As a PhD study, constraints of time and available resources shaped the structure and logistics of the methodology. The Professional Experience program within the university ensures that pre-service teachers will be placed in schools within a one-hour commute of their nominated campus of study. As such, the University of Tasmania, Launceston campus site was chosen on the basis of its convenient

proximity to the researcher's workplace and the availability, geographical location and logistical access to the participants for data collection.

The research project utilised a variety of data gathering methods and therefore required a variety of tailored research instruments. Focus areas and lines of questioning incorporated in the instruments were determined by the researcher's experience within the profession and observation of pre-service and graduate teachers in professional settings. The appropriateness of which was affirmed by a community of educational researchers within the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania (Morgan, 2014).

The design and layout of the instruments were considered in relation to the broad aims of the study and the research questions. It was essential to prepare a well-planned, carefully constructed and brief questionnaire in order to increase the response rate (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2008) and to facilitate efficient data handling (Field, 2009; Pallant, 2005). Questions were constructed carefully to avoid being complex or ambiguous. The final items were then reviewed by a knowledgeable colleague to check for clarity. Attention was also given to the formatting of the computer-based programs SPSS (SPSS Inc., 2009) and Nvivo (QSR International, 2009) which were to be used for ease of data entry and subsequent analysis. Consideration also was given to the layout and aesthetics of the instruments to facilitate and to encourage completion.

The weekly journal, in particular, was designed with colour and graphic design features to encourage its use whilst on Professional Experience school placement. The final versions of each of these instruments are reproduced in full in the appendices: Stage 1 Initial questionnaire (Appendix C), interview schedules (Appendix D), classroom observation guide for researcher (Appendix E), the weekly journal (Appendix F) and the Stage 3 Final questionnaire (Appendix G). The structure and function of each of the four instruments, the intent of their inclusions and the considerations in their development are described in the following section.

### 3.13.1 Development of the research instruments: Stage 1

**Initial Questionnaire**

The Stage 1 initial questionnaire was designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from both the first-year (2007 enrolled) and second-year (2006 enrolled) cohorts of B. Teach pre-service teachers at the University of Tasmania. The questionnaire was divided into three distinct parts: A, B and C. The initial questionnaire consisted of 50 items used to elicit responses pertaining to the participant's demographic context, professional preferences, their perceptions, current understandings and beliefs regarding the teaching profession. The inclusion of an open-ended response section allowed for new, unprecedented foci to be identified from the participants relating to Research Questions 1 - 4.

Part A collected demographic information from the participant and related directly to Research Question 1. It was important to collect information regarding gender and age as anecdotal and documented evidence suggests that the teaching profession, particularly early childhood, and primary levels, remains a field dominated by young females (Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; Riddell & Tett, 2010). It also has been observed that although male teachers are well represented in the profession, they tend to be more prevalent in secondary and tertiary institutions (Tett & Riddell, 2009). As the cohort was enrolled in the B. Teach program, with the pre-requisite of a bachelor degree or relevant qualification and experience, it was expected that the majority of participants would be considered mature age (Tigchelaar et al., 2008). Thus, the initial questionnaire asked participants to specify their age from 20 years to >40 years with increments of five years.

The B. Teach program accepted students from a broad range of backgrounds and previous educational qualifications. The questionnaire invited participants to specify the highest level of academic attainment. It was thought that this information would provide insight into the perceived ability of students from trade certificate or non-university backgrounds to cope with the anticipated academic demands of tertiary education and specifically that of teacher preparation. This information, in light of participant personal reflections regarding their motivations and perceived challenges

of entering teaching and program withdrawal rates, would provide valuable information in terms of future program design and marketing.

The initial questionnaire sought indications of whether previous work experience or qualifications would reflect the future educational specialisation for pre-service teachers. Understanding that participants came from a broad range of alternative fields, bringing with them a range of skills which may align with secondary curriculum areas i.e. Chef wishing to teach home economics or a builder seeking to teach Applied Technology, would provide relevant demographic and information about teaching preferences.

Asking participants where they intended to teach, as well as the year levels with which they intended to work, was to provide additional insight into the motivations of these pre-service teachers and an indication of teaching profession's ability to attract, employ and retain them in the future.

Prerequisites for enrolment into the B. Teach program included a previous degree or extensive work experience, as such, it was expected that the participating pre-service teachers would be of a more mature age than those entering directly from the secondary sector. These possible carer changers have previously worked or studied and be more likely to be personally and socially established in close proximity to the University in Launceston. This assumption was made as the program was not available online or through flexible delivery. It would be anticipated that the majority of students would already be living in the urban city environment and may be reluctant to relocate once qualified. The questionnaire asked participants to specify their preference for urban/metropolitan, rural or isolated environments in which to seek employment.

Schools in Tasmania include independent, Catholic systemic and State schools. Pre-service teachers often have personal views and preferences regarding the merits of each of these school systems in relation to function, remuneration and ethos and tend to seek employment in specific systems (Green et al., 2012). Some specifically

do not wish to be employed in a particular system or alternatively are motivated to seek employment in any system that may provide employment opportunities. The initial questionnaire sought the responses of participants on this topic which concluded the demographic and preferential information in Part A.

Part B of the initial questionnaire sought information regarding the perceptions, understandings and beliefs of the participants about the teaching profession at the time they entered the B. Teach program. It was essential to seek detailed and specific information on a variety of education-related topics in order to record point-in-time data for comparison with similar items from the final questionnaire administered at the conclusion of the program.

Part B presented the participants with a five-point Likert scale to, based on their understanding at the time, indicate their agreement or disagreement with a variety of statements about the teaching profession. Items in Part B of the initial questionnaire related to Research Question 2.

Items 1 to 10 of Part B, presented statements regarding remuneration, professional development, working overseas, perceived job stability, career advancement, employment prospects, relief teaching, availability of support for beginning teachers, public perception of the profession and the social status of teachers.

Five items sought information regarding the participant's own children or intention to have their own children. This insight was particularly relevant in that the teaching profession as it is widely perceived, as keeping family-friendly hours and holidays, and as such is considered convenient in terms of child care and family management (Richardson & Watt, 2002). The question also was aimed to identify if a motivating factor in choosing a career in education was to support the academic growth of children, specifically their own. Item 11 provided a yes or no choice and enquired if the participant had or intended to have children of their own. Those responding in the negative were directed to item 15, avoiding further ‘own children’ based questions. Items 12 to 14 presented statements which measured the importance that

the participant placed on child-care convenient work hours, working in the same school where their children attend as students and assisting their own children in their academic pursuits. Item 15 sought the importance the participants placed on paid holidays.

Subsequent items sought reflections on the intrinsic motivations of the pre-service teacher. Items 16 to 21 presented statements regarding the importance of income and work environment, opportunities to work with children, the success of children, the sharing of knowledge and the encouragement of learning, the importance of role modelling and the provision of stability and guidance to the students they would teach. An additional statement, Item 22, was included which allowed participants to indicate their level of perceived importance of significant teachers they had in their own lives, providing insight into their personal motivations and metaphors for teaching.

The remainder of Part B of the initial questionnaire, Items 23 to 38, required responses regarding practical issues of classroom teaching. This section sought the participant's perception of how challenging they anticipated these areas of teacher practice would be. Statements were presented relating to interpreting and programming within the curriculum, student assessment reporting, and parent-teacher interviews, planning for students with disabilities, inclusive classroom practices, and programming for gifted and talented students. In addition, topics such as mandatory reporting of child welfare, medical emergencies, workload, class size, relationships with students, parents and staff, behaviour management, diagnosed learning conditions and potential violence, also were included in the questionnaire and related to Research Question 2.

Part C of the initial questionnaire allowed for open-ended responses. Questions required participants to nominate the three most challenging (Item 1) and the three most rewarding (Item 2) aspects of teaching as to assist in the articulation of what it is they perceive to potentially be challenging and rewarding for them as they progress through their teacher preparation. The final item of the initial questionnaire

was to ask pre-service teachers to describe in their own words what they thought being a teacher would be like (Item 3). The intention was that the variety of responses would be coded and analysed to expose common threads of thought and to explore reasons for their previous responses (Creswell, 2008). These items related to Research Question 2.

Participants in the initial questionnaire who intended to participate in Stage 2, the two-year longitudinal component of the study, indicated on the questionnaire their name and contact details. This allowed for an individual to be tracked, following ethical requirements, using their responses to all of the instruments presented to them.

### 3.13.2 Development of the research instruments: Stage 2

**Pre-Professional Experience interview**

Face-to-face interviews were used in the study at two significant points in time: at the commencement of the ITE program, in the initial weeks of undertaking professional studies and prior to participating in any Professional Experience as pre-service teachers and at the conclusion of the scheduled Professional Experience.

The semi-structured nature of the interviews reflected the desire of the researcher to place the pre-service teacher and their experience at the centre of the study. This flexible approach allowed for the participant to both respond to the given questions and to direct the interview to reveal their own insights.

The initial, Pre-Professional Experience interview was used to obtain deep understanding and clarity around the pre-service teacher's motivations for seeking teacher qualification, the picture they held of themselves as a teacher, what they perceived would be challenges in the classroom and the perceived required competencies to be successful in the classroom. The results of this data collection instrument related to Research Questions 1 and 2.

**During or Post-Professional Experience interview**

A second interview was planned for either, during or after the completion of a period of Professional Experience school placement. These were carried out in the December of 2007, toward the end of the final semester of the B. Teach program. A recursive interview style (Burns, 2000) was adopted in order to capitalise on the lived professional experiences the pre-service teachers were accruing in their school placement at the time. Item 1 was a general question regarding the perceived success of the current or recent Professional Experience. Items 2 and 3 elicited the participant's thoughts on their perceived expectations of the Professional Experience and clarification of key differences in expectations between the anticipated classroom experience and the actual classroom experience. Item 3 sought clarification of the participant's perceived confidence in their knowledge and skills in readiness for teaching and Item 4 presented an open-ended enquiry opportunity for participants to suggest any areas of practice that needed strengthening prior to independent teaching. Item 5 revisited the participant's predicted challenges from the initial Pre-PE interview and sought reflection on the realities up to and including the time of the interview of their previously expressed concerns in the classroom. Item 6 asked the participant to project into the future and make a comment about any formerly unforeseen classroom challenges that might impact on their ability to teach successfully as a beginning teacher. This During-PE or Post-PE interview provided data to address Research Questions 3 and 4.

**Pre-Professional Experience interviews**

As many students in second degree or postgraduate education programs are considered 'career changers' (Tigchelaar et al., 2008) and possibly transitioning to full-time study from full-time employment, the question related to the participant's motivations to teach was expected to provide complex and varied responses. It was anticipated that the responses to the related items would provide a seamless transition to the expression of an image that the pre-service teachers held of themselves in the teaching role. Asking them to provide an explanation of what they thought that teaching would be like in a school setting was intended to identify key

features of what was essentially the conception of their professional identity (Bullough et al., 2006; Morrison, 2013b).

During the initial Pre-PE interview, pre-service teachers were to be asked to project and identify what they perceived the greatest challenge for them would be in the classroom. The purpose of this question was to isolate what the pre-service teacher might identify as a fear or concern regarding their ability to perform in the role of teacher. As the participants had only just commenced their formal studies, one might expect that they would maintain opinions similar to a member of the general public regarding education. The responses recorded during this Pre-PE interview also would provide information concerning the perceptions of the wider community and the teaching profession.

The final guiding question was designed to encourage the participant to identify what knowledge and skills they thought were essential for them to be successful when they would first commence teaching. It was designed to prompt the pre-service teacher to share the image of themselves in the teaching role, what they expected the profession would be like, what they would have to teach, what challenges they would face and what skills they would require overcoming those challenges. This line of questioning also provided an opportunity for the participant to discuss not only their professional knowledge and skills (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; McCormack & Thomas, 2003) but also how their personal values and attitudes would assist them in assimilating into a new work environment (C. Gardner & Williamson, 2007; Plunkett & Dyson, 2011).

**Classroom observation**

Classroom observations of pre-service teachers undertaking Professional Experience were to take place during their final school placement. This ensured that the pre-service teachers were actually teaching and delivering their own lessons and functioning as the teacher in the classroom with support from the assigned colleague teacher. The observation visit was not to be used to assess the student, but rather to ensure that their experience appeared to be consistent with the

declarations stated in questionnaires and interviews, and as a means of triangulating the data (Creswell, 2008).

The development of a classroom observation schedule (Appendix E) was established in order to support consistency in the researchers' observation of each of the participants in their respective and varied school settings. Data were recorded under the broad headings of personal and professional attributes, planning and teaching, and classroom management.

**Weekly Journal**

Participants were asked to keep a weekly journal throughout the program of their Professional Experience to assist in the collection of data which mapped their responses to the personal and professional aspects of teaching (Appendix F). It provided an opportunity for students to reflect upon their week within a school environment capitalising on the emotion of the immediate experience. Participants were asked to reflect on what they found to be either an enjoyable or challenging moment within the week or to comment on any unusual events or activities they experienced or participated in such as, sports carnivals, parent-teacher meetings, excursions, staff professional learning or staff cultural activities. Participants also were asked to calculate how many hours were spent on teaching preparation and extracurricular activities at school and at home within the week.

The keeping of the journal during the Professional Experience placement was important as it allowed for the researcher to capture point-in-time experiences of the pre-service teacher. Comparison between the journal entries and responses provided by participants during the final interview could be made. It was understood that the pre-service teachers were under pressure of workload in their Professional Experience and may not participate in the journal-writing element during the study.

**During or Post-Professional Experience interview**

At the conclusion of the initial interview, a mutually convenient time was to be made with the participants to meet again during or after the final Professional Experience

if possible, or if the participant was agreeable, to meet again at the conclusion of the program. The second interview was to provide an opportunity to clarify anything raised in the initial interview as well as discuss the progress of the current or most recent Professional Experience. It was expected that these particular interviews would be lengthy and provide rich and extensive data as students would be either immersed in their teaching experience or would have recently completed their school placement.

The During-PE or Post-PE interview schedule allowed for an informal discussion of the classroom experience (Appendix D). Participants were asked to compare their perceptions with their actual experiences and comment as to whether or not it was what they had expected. The pre-service teachers were then to be asked to expand upon this response which would help them to clarify what they had perceived the teaching experience to be like. The participants also were invited to assess whether they felt they had the knowledge and skills to be teaching effectively upon graduation. Further, they were asked what professional learning might increase their effectiveness as a beginning teacher. This allowed them to reflect on their program structure and how well they thought it had prepared them for *in situ* teaching. A closely aligned item was presented in the Stage 3 final questionnaire.

Prior to the During-PE or Post-PE interview, the researcher would review the individual's responses from the initial interview. The researcher would then refresh the participant regarding their contributions from the initial interview and asked them to compare these perceptions with their current experience. This was an opportunity also to ask participants to note any challenges they had not anticipated prior to their classroom experience.

The third and final interview occurred at the conclusion of their studies if agreeable to the participant. It was intended for the participant to reflect on their B. Teach program, their time in teacher preparation and most importantly, the integration of theory and practice. Concluding questions were asked in the interview to ascertain the level of enthusiasm of the pre-service teacher for their new profession, “Would

you recommend teaching as a profession to others?" and "If you were invited to talk to a group of year 12 students about teaching as a career, what would you highlight to them?" This interview also was an opportunity for the researcher to thank the participant for their valuable insights and reflections and to welcome them to the teaching profession as beginning teachers.

### 3.13.1 Development of the research instruments: Stage 3

**Final Questionnaire**

Stage 3 involved the administering of a follow-up final questionnaire to all available B. Teach students, including the Stage 1 and Stage 2 participants, at the conclusion of their program in October 2008. The responses were to be compared to those provided initially by the same cohort in Stage 1 initial questionnaire administered in February 2007.

In the same vein as Part B of the initial questionnaire, Part A of the final questionnaire invited the participants to indicate on a Likert scale, how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a variety of statements about the teaching profession, based on their more informed and experienced understanding. The line of questioning aimed to establish the perceived effectiveness of the integration of theory to practice.

Participants were asked questions regarding processes and protocols relating to the Teachers Registration Board, registering for employment with the Department of Education, obtaining Good Character checks and about their awareness of relevant codes of conduct. Participants also were asked if they were aware of any support structures in place for beginning teachers in their first year of teaching.

For the purpose of direct comparison to the initial questionnaire, statements relating to interpreting and programming within the curriculum, student assessment, reporting and parent-teacher interviews, planning and programming for students with disabilities, and inclusive classroom practices and programming for gifted and

talented students, were repeated. Similarly, statements regarding mandatory reporting of child welfare, medical emergencies, relationships with students, parents and staff, behaviour management, diagnosed learning conditions and public perceptions of the teaching profession were to be revisited.

Part B of the final questionnaire presented pre-service teachers with three sets of four statements. Participants were asked to rank the four questions in order of importance. Each set contained questions addressing the values, attitudes and the practicalities of working in education:

> Question '(a)' of each group presented statements related to professional work conditions. Issues pertaining to income and future earnings, employability, both locally and internationally and their perception of job security, were included.
>
> Question '(b)' of each group asked for of the importance participants placed on family-friendly work hours, holidays and sick leave and job flexibility consistent with family enabling/supporting needs.
>
> In each group, question '(c)' offered statements pertaining to altruistic motivations and working with children, such as helping children to succeed or creating a better society, encouragement of children or providing stability and support to children who might not otherwise experience it.
>
> Finally, question '(d)' of each group referred to elements of required competencies. Statements referring to the school environment, working independently or as a team member and the variety and stimulating activities teachers participating in as part of their work day, were all provided for ranking.

The rationale regarding the inclusion of these items was to determine what was important to the pre-service teachers under the broad areas of professional work

conditions, family enabling/supporting needs, working with children and required competencies. The results of these rankings would be cross-referenced with the participant's responses to Part B and Part C of the initial questionnaire.

Part C of the final questionnaire, allowed for open-ended responses as it did in the initial questionnaire. Again, participants were asked to nominate the three most challenging and the three most rewarding aspects of teaching. This would allow for direct comparison with Stage 1 initial questionnaire results. Those respondents who participated in all stages of the study would have their results directly cross-referenced in order to detect any change in preferences perceptions and understanding over the two-year program.

Participants were given the opportunity to reflect on their own experience of the B. Teach program at the University of Tasmania. They were asked to make suggestions regarding what they thought would have been the best preparation for pre-service teachers in light of their own professional Experience and how prepared they had felt. The question also suggested what areas, certificates, or fields of study could have been included that would have allowed them to be more competitive in the employment market. Participants were given the opportunity to comment on anything related to their initial teacher preparation experience.

## 3.14 Data organisation

### 3.14.1 Questionnaires

Quantitative data obtained from both the initial and the final questionnaires were coded and entered into SPSS (SPSS Inc., 2009) as variable groupings which represented and described the independent variables being measured (Field, 2006).

The initial questionnaire yielded data from 9 demographic (Part A) and 38 perception and belief based items (Part B) as well as 3 open-ended responses (Part C). The final questionnaire presented 15 items pertaining to the integration of theory and practice (Part A), three groups of 4 ordinal questions relating to the individual in the teaching profession (Part B) and 4 open-ended items (Part C). Tick-a-box and five-point Likert scale responses were allocated numerical identifiers which allowed the raw data to be entered into SPSS 14.0 and later into PASW Statistics GradPack 18 software programs (SPSS Inc., 2007; SPSS Inc., 2009) as numerical values. Within SPSS, each survey was assigned an ID number which allowed for case study summaries to be generated. A preliminary review of the data found only two missing values for the demographic 'Age' question, only one missing value for 'workload'. Several participants either declined to answer the open-ended response questions or provided only one or two key terms of the three requested. In these instances, the analysis was carried out on the available valid data for each item. Open-ended and short answer responses were recorded as key concepts or string variables in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet (Microsoft Office, 2007). These string variables were then allocated a numerical identifier. Emerging themes allowed for these individually coded responses to be recoded into more inclusive categories which were then used for final analysis. The final questionnaire items and possible responses were allocated a data entry code and recorded in a spreadsheet format using Microsoft Excel (Microsoft Office, 2007).

### 3.14.2 Interview material

Fourteen Stage 2 individual interviews were audio-recorded, with the permission of the interviewees. All tapes were transcribed in full (verbatim) by a professional transcriber. The use of a transcriber was a means of expediting the data for entry into Nvivo 8 (QSR International, 2008), a qualitative statistical analysis package. An interview transcript example is included as Appendix H. These electronic versions of the interviews were entered into Nvivo 8 (QSR International, 2008) and Nvivo 9 (QSR International, 2009) for qualitative analysis. Recordings of applied data labels, label descriptions, and re-code details were collated using spreadsheets in Excel (Microsoft Office, 2007).

All data were thematically analysed and continually refined throughout the analysis process. The information that each instrument provided was rich and diverse demonstrating a complex interaction within and between both qualitative and quantitative aspects of the data collected. Subsequently, a need emerged for the continual recoding of qualitative data, aligned with a statistical analysis of questionnaire data enabled comparison across data sets and individual cases.

The initial face-to-face interviews with the newly enrolled and inexperienced pre-service teachers were to set the initial benchmark by which all comparisons and later reflections upon the teaching experience for each individual, were to be measured. The semi-structured interviews used in the study provided in-depth data drawn from the personal experiences of the pre-service teachers as they progressed through the theoretical and Professional Experience components of their B. Teach program.

All interviewees were given the opportunity to clarify any statements or include additional comments at the conclusion of the interview. The initial interview transcript was also presented to the participant at the During-PE or Post-PE interview for comment or clarification. No participant wished to include additional material post interview or make any changes or omissions to transcripts. Once interviews were ready in electronic format they were entered into Nvivo 8 (QSR International, 2008) with emerging themes and concepts coded (See Appendices H

and I). Recoding and consolidation of categories coincided with an upgrade to Nvivo 9 (QSR International, 2009).

Classroom observations and journal writing documents were used to triangulate data collection. Handwritten participant copies were entered into Nvivo (QSR International 2009). Analysis proceeded as for interview transcripts including the coding of data and identification of emerging themes and concepts.

### 3.14.3 Classroom observation

Classroom observations were arranged directly with the participants who negotiated with the colleague teacher a suitable time to observe during a teaching session whilst on Professional Experience school placement. This was carried out in partnership with the University through the Professional Experience program and as such no additional permissions were required from the principal of the school. Six classroom observations were conducted, and four participants chose to conduct the During-PE interview at this time. The purposes of the classroom observations were to observe the pre-service teacher in the classroom setting and to visually confirm behaviours relating to personal and professional attributes, planning and teaching and classroom management. It was not the intent of the researcher to assess any of these foci but instead to witness the participant *in situ* providing a deeper understanding of the educational context described in interviews. A guide for the researcher was utilised (See Appendix E) to help focus the attention of the researcher once in the classroom. This was not shown to the participant as to not imply that it was a form of assessment.

### 3.14.4 Weekly journal

The weekly journal was given to participants to complete at the end of each of week they spent in the classroom during Professional Experience. It provided reflective questions about enjoyable and challenging aspects of the week as well as questions relating to school-based events and extra-curricular duties and workloads. Many

participants found this to be an additional task to the demands of planning and teaching and so chose to not submit this instrument. Two participants provided data in this format.

## 3.15 Data analysis

### 3.15.1 Quantitative data

The quantitative questionnaire data allowed for the exploration of the identified variables individually, as well as the identification and examination of any significant relationships between these variables. By presenting two questionnaires with common variables, at two separate points in time, the comparison was enabled. The sample was considered to be a relatively small size and opportunistic in nature. As such, statistical analysis procedures that assume normal distribution were not able to be employed (Field, 2009).

### 3.15.2 Frequency Distributions

Quantitative nominal data such as that produced by the demographics section (Part A, Q1 - 9) of the initial questionnaire yielded nine responses which were important in that the demographic profile of the pre-service teacher added insight and context to many of the preferences selected. Each questionnaire item represented a key area of inquiry and was nominated as a variable for data entry. Part A, Questions 1-3, 5-6, 8-9 presented a tick-a-box format. Items 4 and 7, invited open-ended contributions related to previous fields of study in which their highest qualification was obtained, and which were coded and consolidated into themes represented by a numerical value.

Part B elicited Likert Scale responses and all five categories; ‘Strongly disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Neutral’, ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’. These categories were later consolidated for analysis to three groupings; ‘Disagree’, ‘Neutral’ and ‘Agree’, and were explored using a number of statistical tests to develop an understanding of the data and the lived beliefs and experiences of the participants.

Univariate testing allowed the development of frequency distributions for all items presented in the initial questionnaire; Part A Items 1 to 9 and Part B; Items 1 – 38. Frequency distribution and histograms allowed for a visual summary of the data, and identification of themes or errors in data entry (Field, 2009). Associations between variables in Part B of the initial questionnaire, using the bivariate cross-tabulation function in SPSS (SPSS Inc., 2009), were examined using Chi-square analysis for independence (Field, 2009; Pallant, 2005) or where the assumptions of Chi-square testing had been violated, Likelihood ratio testing (Field, 2009) for all scaled variables. Results indicated a number of statistically significant associations at the level of $p<0.05$ and $p<0.01$. Where statistically significant associations were determined, inspection of the cross tabulation counted and expected values were examined to determine the nature of the difference.

The final questionnaire maintained a similar structure to that of the initial questionnaire; however, the demographic data obtained through the initial questionnaire were not required to be repeated as the final questionnaire was administered to the same cohort of pre-service teachers. Part A of the final questionnaire provided an opportunity for the respondents to indicate their level of agreement with 15 given statements that aligned to the 38 questions presented in Part B of the initial questionnaire.

Part B of the final questionnaire presented three sets of four statements each. Participants were asked to rank the statements in order of importance from one to four (1 = most important and 4 = least important). Nonparametric inferential tests were applied to the data to further inspect the relationships between the understandings and beliefs of the pre-service teachers. Kendall's tau (Field, 2006) was used to calculate the strength of the relationship between items in Part A of the final questionnaire.

### 3.15.3 Qualitative data

Charmaz (2016) indicates that constructivist grounded theory means 'designing methodological strategies to explore what the researcher discovers along the way' (p. 35). Although final versions of instruments were required to be submitted for ethics approval prior to the commencement of the study, semi-structured interview questions allowed for the exploration of ideas and thoughts expressed by participants during this stage of qualitative data collection. These interviews also created the opportunity to expand and reflect on the quantitative questionnaire responses of individuals, enhancing the depth of the researcher's understanding of interpretation of data.

Once audiotaped interviews were transcribed into the word processing program Microsoft Word (Microsoft Office, 2007) they were imported into Nvivo 8 (QSR International, 2008) for analysis as sources for coding of nodes. Tree nodes were identified from the emerging themes within the data and applied. This allowed for the development of an organisational structure that categorised the themes and subthemes while maintaining the integrity of the participant responses. The source documents were viewed as 'living' documents and were modified, changed and re-categorised as the researcher's' understanding developed (Richards, 1999). Rich text sources were coded according to the specified tree nodes and enabled a range of contextual, theme and response factors to be identified (Plano Clark & Badiee, 2010) and utilised to support and enhance the qualitative data. Classroom observations and journal entries were entered directly into the Nvivo software program as additional source material and analysed using the same process.

## 3.16 Summary

The overarching research aim of this study was to explore the preconceptions, understandings, and beliefs regarding the teaching profession held by pre-service teachers. Further aims were to investigate the effect of theoretical knowledge and Professional Experience on the pre-service teachers' perceived preparedness for classroom teaching and to examine any shift in perception regarding the teaching

profession and the contextual, personal and professional factors that may have contributed to any change in perception experienced as they progressed through their ITE program.

This chapter has attended to the question of research approach and outlined how the research method was designed to explore the pre-service teachers' preconceptions and to make meaning of their lived experience through a two-year longitudinal, multi-instrument, quantitative – qualitative mixed methodology study. The processes of data collection, organisation and analysis have been described, as have the methods by which reliability and validity were to be upheld. The process of instrument design, the selection of the sample and the ultimate project timeline are delineated.

In the following chapter, the results derived from the data analysis processes will be discussed in the context of the research aims; demographics - Research Question 1 and the Understandings, perceptions and beliefs – Research Question 2.

# Chapter 4

# Results – Research Questions 1 and 2

## 4.1 Introduction to the results chapters

This chapter is the first of three to present the research findings. Within these chapters, findings from both the initial and final questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, classroom observations and weekly journal entries resulting from the data collection, are presented in relation to the research aims and to each of the four research questions where appropriate.

In addressing the aims of the study, it was important to:

- determine the demographic and preferential profile of the pre-service teachers enrolled in the B. Teach degree at the University of Tasmania (Research Question 1);
- explore the initial perceptions, understandings and beliefs of pre-service teachers about being a classroom teacher and their own professional motivations and aspirations (Research Question 2);
- follow these pre-service teachers as they progressed through their ITE programs and ultimately as they approached their first teaching experience to map how their perceptions changed over time and as a result of pre-service teaching (Research Question 3); and,
- investigate the nature of the contextual, personal and professional issues that contributed to the changing perceptions (Research Question 4).

## 4.2 Organisation of the chapter

Initially, quantitative data will be presented to specifically address the results of each of the nine demographic and preferential items offered in the sequence in which they appeared in the initial questionnaire. Additional supporting and clarifying qualitative data, that is, statements obtained from open-ended sections of both the initial and final questionnaires and face-to-face interviews will be presented where they relate to quantitative data. Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, schematic and visual representation of results are also presented to describe each cohort of 2006 (second-year) and 2007 (first-year) intakes, their demographic profile and their professional preferences. Significant relationships between key variables are explained prior to the summary of the findings related to Research Questions 1 and 2 at the conclusion of this chapter.

## 4.3 Recoding of variables

A variety of quantitative and qualitative data were obtained through a mixed-method approach to data collection employed within this study. Demographic details, expressions of personal preferences, and understandings and importance placed upon key elements of the teaching profession were shared by participants. Data gathered over the two-year collection period became increasingly informative and refined as participants were able to articulate their views and opinions more confidently regarding a profession about which they were gaining knowledge and to which they increasingly were identifying as belonging. Questionnaires, interviews and weekly journal writing responses revealed consistent motivations, beliefs and perceptions across the cohorts that served to consolidate the developing themes that emerged throughout analysis.

### 4.3.1 Quantitative data

Data were recoded based on the responses provided by participants consistent with a grounded theory approach and the need to reduce categories to those that best allowed for a narrative that described the interrelationships in a refined way (Creswell, 2008).

Part A of the initial questionnaire addressed demographic components and preferences of the pre-service teachers. Both gender (Item 1) and age (Item 2) were descriptors that required no consolidation of categories. Collapsing age range categories was considered; however, upon reflection, the specified age variables contributed to understanding the demographic and preferential profile of the pre-service teachers as well as the pathway they had taken into teaching. Although a diverse range of occupations and areas were given (n=41), they were categorised readily into six discrete domains: Creative Arts, Arts & Humanities, Professions, Trades, Sciences and the Service industry. See Table 16.

Table 16.

*Item 3: In what field of study did you obtain your highest qualification?*

| Field of highest qualification: nominated | Field of highest qualification: Coded |
|---|---|
| **Contemporary arts, Design, Graphic design, Fine arts, Music, Performing arts, Visual arts** | Creative Arts |
| **Archaeology, Anthropology, Arts, Asian studies, English, Geography, History, International studies, Languages, Library and information studies, Media, Political studies, Philosophy, Psychology, Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE), Sociology** | Arts and Humanities |
| **Accountancy, Architecture, Business, Civil Engineering, Computing/Information Technology (IT), Law** | Professions |
| **Carpentry, Chef, Fitting and Turning, Hairdressing, Joinery, Mechanics, Machinery** | Trades |
| **Agricultural sciences, Aquaculture, Science, Sport science** | Sciences |
| **Communications, Recreation, Sport and Tourism** | Service Industry |

Item 5 invited responses regarding the intended teaching location of the participant. Multiple responses were permitted regarding the participant's intention to teach in Tasmania, Mainland Australia or Overseas. Recoding was required to accommodate categories of Tasmania, Australia (Mainland and Tasmania), Australia and Overseas

(Mainland, Tasmania and Overseas) and Overseas. Similarly, Item 6 sought participants' intended teaching year levels with the option of multiple responses, resulting in a recoding of seven categories to five: Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary and College, College and TAFE and All levels. Whether participants considered themselves to have a particular subject specialisation was investigated in Item 7. This was indicated as a yes or no response. If the response was positive, participants were invited to indicate the specialisation. Twenty-two different specialisations and combinations of; Art, Asian Studies, Design and Technology, Drama, English, Food Technology, French, History, Information Technology, Japanese, Mathematics, Music, Science and Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) were nominated. These categories were seen to fit into six curriculum areas and were recoded as; Creative Arts, English & SOSE, Materials, Design & Technology (MDT), Mathematics and Science, Information Communications & Technology (ICT), Languages Other Than English (LOTE) and SOSE.

Item 8 related to the preference of participants to teach in particular geographical areas or categories of schools: Urban/city, Rural or Isolated. No participant nominated 'Isolated' as a sole preference. These categories were renamed to better reflect the nature of these school locations and how they are referred to in the current literature: 'Metropolitan', 'Country areas' and 'All areas'.

Item 9 of the initial questionnaire sought the preferences of pre-service teachers regarding their desire to work in the Public Education (State), Catholic Education, or Independent Education systems. Participants nominated any combination of these three categories. No participant nominated to teach only in an independent school. See Table 17.

Table 17.

*Questionnaire 1, Part A – Demographic items with recoded variables.*

| Item | Original variables | Recoded Variables |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Gender** | Male or female | Male or female |
| **2. Age** | 20-25,<br>26-30,<br>31-35,<br>36-40 ,<br>> 40 years | 20-25,<br>26-30,<br>31-35,<br>36-40,<br>> 40 years |
| **3. Highest qualification** | Trade certificate,<br>Bachelor Degree,<br>Graduate Diploma,<br>Other | Trade certificate,<br>Bachelor degree or<br>Post Graduate studies |
| **4. Field of highest qualification** | Open, short answer response | Creative Arts,<br>Arts/Humanities,<br>Professional,<br>Trades,<br>Sciences or<br>Service Industry |
| **5. Intended teaching location** | Tasmania,<br>Mainland and<br>Overseas | Tasmania,<br>Australia,<br>Australia and Overseas<br>Overseas |
| **6. Intended teaching level** | Early Childhood,<br>Lower Primary,<br>Middle Primary,<br>Upper Primary,<br>Secondary,<br>College (Years 11 and 12),<br>TAFE | Early Childhood,<br>Primary,<br>Secondary and College,<br>College and TAFE,<br>All levels |
| **7. Specialist area** | Yes or No<br>Open ended – Please specify | Yes or No<br>Creative arts,<br>English & SOSE,<br>MDT,<br>Maths and Science,<br>ICT,<br>LOTE and SOSE |
| **8. Intended teaching school type** | Urban/city,<br>Rural or<br>Isolated | Metropolitan,<br>Country Areas,<br>All Areas |
| **9. Intended teaching system** | State,<br>Catholic ,<br>Independent | Public Education,<br>Catholic Education,<br>Independent Education,<br>Public and Catholic Education,<br>Public and Independent Education |

Part B of the initial questionnaire presented a five-point Likert scale: 'Strongly Disagree', 'Disagree', 'Neutral', 'Agree', and 'Strongly Agree'. As the researcher considered this data to be ordinal as opposed to interval (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2008), the data required analysis using non-parametric tests. Low frequencies were submitted by participants consistently for some categories and so collapsing categories to a three-point scale: 'Disagree, Neutral, and Agree' was deemed statistically acceptable and was recoded to provide a clear indicator of the participants understanding of, importance placed upon or perceived challenge of a number of teaching related elements.

### 4.3.2 Qualitative data

Part C of the initial questionnaire presented three open-ended questions:

1. *What do you consider to be the three most challenging aspects of teaching?*
2. *What do you consider to be the most attractive or rewarding aspects of teaching?*
3. *Briefly, describe what you think being a teacher will be like.*

Data were initially read through, divided into sections of responses to particular interview questions and then coded according to emerging themes (Creswell, 2008). As recurring themes were refined, redundant or overlapping themes were consolidated and recoded as new code labels.

From the responses given, key terms were manually coded for responses to each of the 3 items resulting in 28 terms recoded to five nodes, 22 terms recoded to 4 nodes, and 34 terms recoded to 3 nodes respectively. See Table 17.

Constant and concurrent examination of the relevant literature, interview transcripts, questionnaire data, classroom observations and journal writing led to a refining of these categories.

Table 18.

*Questionnaire 1, Part C – Recoded open-ended responses.*

| Challenging | Recoded | Rewarding | Recoded | Beliefs about teaching | Recoded |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Behaviour management | **Behaviour management** | Travel, Ethical employment, Job security, Professional development | **Professional rewards** | Challenging, Emotionally taxing, Frustrating, Hard work, busy, Intense/passionate, Mentally challenging, stressful, Thankless, Poor financial rewards, Difficult students | **Challenging** |
| Conflict resolution, Relationship issues | **Relationships** | Remembered positively by students, Building community, Family friendly hours/holidays, Variety, Overcoming difficulty, Respect and status, Role model, Self-fulfilling | **Personal rewards** | Sense of community, Exciting, Contributing to the bigger picture, Creativity, Fun, Joy, Confidence, Helping, Connecting with students, Rewarding, Seeing children grow and learn, Self-fulfilling, Supportive colleagues, Reasonable income | **Rewarding** |
| Assessment, Reporting, Planning, Teaching, IT, Curriculum, Finding employment, Workload | **Work related tasks** | Instil a passion for learning in others, Sharing knowledge, Stimulating or educating a child's mind, Student achievement, Developing students socially and emotionally | **Educating students** | Improving with time, Administrative, Pleasant work environment, Share knowledge /enthusiasm, Travel, Planning/ content/ programming, Consistent/ fair/ compassionate, Flexible/ approachable/ professional | **Professional Development** |
| Balancing home and work, Anxiety, Expectations of others, Inclusive practices, Maintaining motivation, Evaluating own performance, All areas challenging | **Personal issues** | Connecting with children, Influencing a child's life/future, Relationships and interactions | **Nurturing students** | | |
| Teaching at the right level, Poor pay, Poor collegial support, Organisation, Time management, Child welfare, Limited resources or time, Pastoral care, Engaging students, Bureaucracy, Class size | **Professional issues** | | | | |

A total of 42 first-year students and 39 second-year students completed the questionnaire. Thirty-five students indicated a desire to participate in the second, qualitative stage of the study. Although these students provided contact details, only 14 were available for the initial Pre-Professional Experience interview. Six of these participants were willing to undertake a classroom observation, 2 completed weekly journals and 4 participated further in a During or Post-PE interview. The participation rate had reduced to 32% between the first and last questionnaire with only 26 pre-service teachers completing the final questionnaire. See Table 19.

Table 19.
*Participation of Bachelor of Teaching students and stage of the study.*

| Stage | Instrument | 1st year | 2nd year | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Initial Questionnaire | 42 | 39 | 81 |
| **2** | Pre-Professional Experience Interview | 10 | 3 | 13 |
| **2** | During or Post-Professional Experience Interview | 4 | - | 4 |
| **2** | Classroom observation | 6 | - | 6 |
| **2** | Weekly Journal | 2 | - | 2 |
| **3** | Final Questionnaire | 26 | - | 26 |

### 4.4 Research Question 1

Findings of the study related to the demographic data and Research Question 1 are presented:

*What are the demographic and preferential profiles of pre-service teachers enrolled in the Bachelor of Teaching Degree at the University of Tasmania?*

Data obtained from the initial questionnaire are presented here as results that describe the demographic and preferential context of pre-service teachers enrolled in the B. Teach program. These data were collected through the initial questionnaire Part A, Items 1 to 9. Participants provided information regarding their gender (Item 1), age (Item 2), the highest level of educational qualification obtained (Item 3) and the field in which this qualification had been obtained (Item 4). Information was also sought regarding the teaching preferences of the pre-service teachers: where they intended to teach (Item 5), what student year level they preferred to teach (Item 6), whether they had a specialist area and what they considered it to be (Item 7), their preference for an urban, a rural, or an isolated location in which they wish to teach (Item 8) and for the educational system they in which they preferred to be employed (Item 9), were all addressed in this section of the questionnaire. See Table 16. In addressing Research Question 1 both first-year and second-year cohorts were requested to provide demographic and preferential data; thus, the data collection spanned two sequential year intakes, 2007 (first-year n=42) and 2006 (second-year n=39).

Preliminary analysis of the descriptive statistics of Items 1 to 9 revealed frequencies for each item tested against the pre-service teachers' year of study. Tests for normality using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk revealed significant values ($p \leq 0.05$) indicating that the data were not normally distributed. It is for this reason that non-parametric tests were conducted to further analyse the results (Field, 2009; Pallant, 2005). Data analysis revealed that the statistical 5% trimmed mean for all variables was similar to the actual mean. This indicated

minimal, if any outlying data. Visual representation of the data through the production of frequency histograms confirm similarities and differences reflected in the statistical analyses. See for example Figure 7. Gender distribution (Item1).

### 4.4.1 What is your gender? (Item 1)

Of the 42 first-year participants, 30 identified as female (71.43%) and 12 as male (28.57%). The second-year cohort of 39 participants identified as 23 female (58.97%) and 16 male (41.03%). No participant declined to indicate their gender or provide an alternative response. See Figure 7.


*Figure 7.* What is your gender? (Item 1).

### 4.4.2 What is your age? (Item 2)

Five age ranges were presented for selection. See Table 15. Recoding of the categories was considered for ease of analysis; however, each of the categories, when reviewed with corresponding data, provided insight into the activities and directions taken by the individuals prior to enrolling in the B. Teach program. Two first-year participants did not disclose their age (first-year n=40, second-year n=39). See Figure 8.

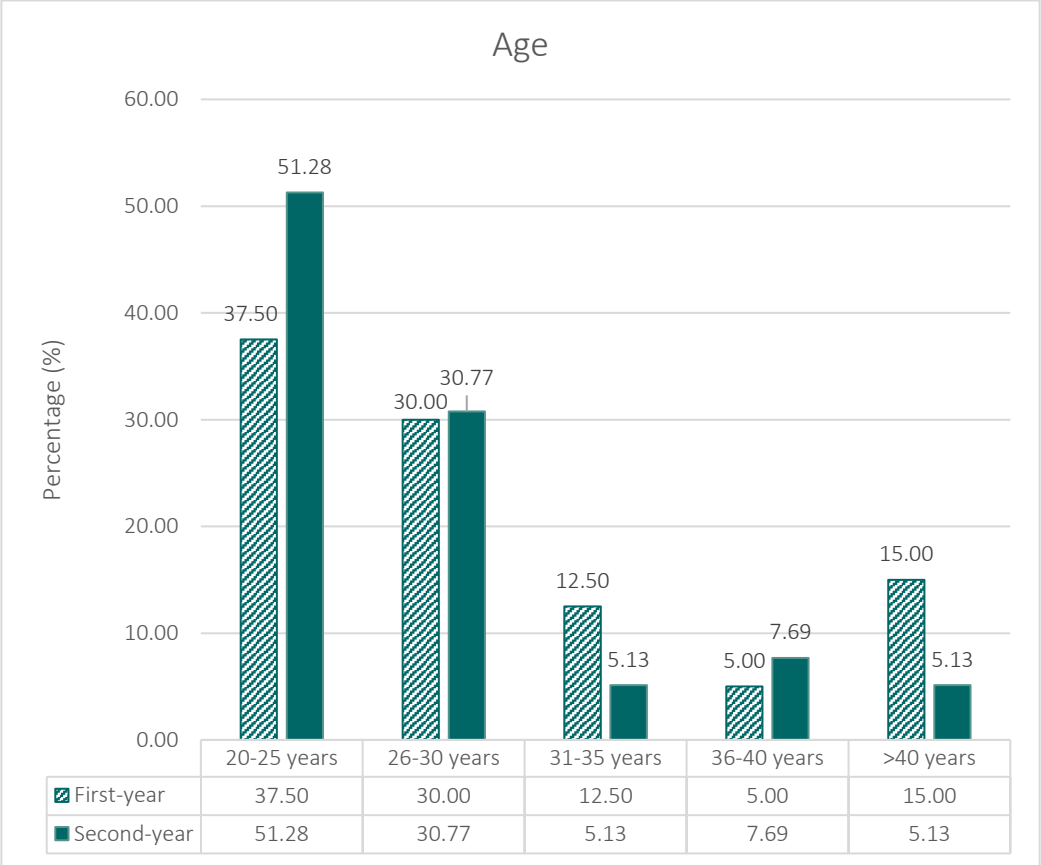



*Figure 8*. What is your age? (Item 2).

The greater proportion of the B. Teach students were under the age of 31 years (first-year 67.50%, second-year 82.05%). Those aged 20-25 years constituted the largest group (first-year 37.50%, second-year 51.28%) followed by the 26-30 year-old group (first-year 30.00%, second-year 30.77%).

Beyond a direct pathway from undergraduate studies to the B. Teach program, a variety of redirections were shared by the participants. For instance, after leaving school, Nigel (Post-PE2, Second-year) was offered alternative employment managing a large supermarket before returning to tertiary study to complete a bachelor degree in psychology. Equally, Sarah was unsure of her preferred career pathway and so was open to a variety of options:

> I actually went into a Tourism Management degree first. When I left Grade 12, I had no idea what I wanted to do, so I just tried a few different things until I found something that fit.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Some participants had obtained trade certificates or bachelor degrees from other disciplines, but they had experienced difficulty in obtaining employment in their chosen field, did not enjoy the work, or cited other reasons for considering teaching as another possible employment option. For instance, Simon completed his apprenticeship as a fitter and turner, entered into diesel mechanics and then other employment but never settled into full-time work, as he explained;

> I went farming for two years as an employee, tractor driving…I was brought up on a farm so it wasn't that different…in the 80's, I plodded along from job to job.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sue found herself in a similar position completing a hairdressing apprenticeship after Year 10.

> I would have loved to have done it [teaching] but then I was offered the opportunity of an apprenticeship… after Grade 10 [to] earn money…
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Other unexpected life events caused changes in career progression or direction for Kim and Simon. Kim was involved in a serious car accident forcing her to

prioritise her recovery over her career. A family member with an acquired brain injury resulted in Simon making changes to his work life plans, as he explained;

> I have been out of the workforce for…nearly 12 years looking after family…I just could not think about doing anything full-time or I couldn't commit to anything.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Other participants, such as Sophie, entered into a bachelor degree without interruption from Year 12. Although she was able to utilise her computing and information Technology (IT) qualifications, she was motivated to study teaching;

> I've been working in a big corporation for the last few years… a bank…a very strong business role…even in my current role, I've ended up doing a lot of training of other people.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

Jessica and Joanne took some time to consider whether teaching was right for them before enrolling in the B. Teach program, as they explained;

> I looked at education and from other people that I know that have done education, it just seemed too simple to me.
>
> (Jessica, Pre-PE, First-year)

> When I was doing my music degree, they [the University] introduced a combined degree, music and the Bachelor of Teaching and I thought that I would do just the straight music first so that I could [decide] when I finished that, decide if teaching was the way to go. I…wanted to leave my options open.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

The 31- to 35-year-old pre-service teachers all possessed a minimum bachelor degree with one participant holding a post-graduate qualification. This group constituted only 8.90% of the first and second-year cohorts combined. The 36-40 year-old group comprised only 6.33% of both cohorts. Initial interviews

suggested that career transition at these ages was less desirable as many participants had children, primary age or below, and the prospect of raising small children and undertaking university studies full-time was perceived to be too time consuming and too financially demanding. Simon had applied to undertake the program years prior but was deterred by his personal situation, as he explained;

> I thought no, I have a good job, you're going back on a low wage. No, I'll give it a miss for a year or two and then a year rolls into two, three, four, five…
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Another challenge for this age group was having progressed within a previous field and having achieved a level of efficacy and seniority. To give this up to begin again in a new field of employment was daunting, as Sue emphasised;

> I guess it's starting back at the beginning again…trying to keep in touch with where students [are at], what they like and what they want to do…making it interesting for them is a challenge because of my age, I'm 39.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Despite these obstacles, enrolments of pre-service teachers in the 40 years and above category was observed. Some participants connected their enrolment in the B. Teach as a result of their parental responsibilities easing, or, that they had made the transition at this time in their lives as a result of changing marital or financial situations and the need to better support their families.

> I wasn't married [anymore], I realised that it was the first time I thought about where am I going as an individual having a nine-year-old son to bring up on my own…it's financial.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Others, having worked for a period of time in a different field, sought the stimulation of a new career, as William identified;

> I'm the sort of person who every two to three years tends to get really bored with what he's doing anyway and just turns around and does something else.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

The second-year pre-service teacher cohort, in particular, showed a more direct pathway to teaching, evidenced by a more expedient entry, with the majority of these participants entering the ITE program before the age of 30 (82.05 %). This compared to 60.50% for the first-year cohort.

### 4.4.3 What was the highest level of educational qualification you had completed? (Item 3)

Four options were made available in Item 3 of the questionnaire to elicit nomination of the highest qualification the participant had obtained: Trade Certificate, Bachelor Degree, Graduate Diploma and Other. The last option yielded responses that included both Graduate Certificates and a Master's Degree. The five resulting categories were recoded as Trade Certificates, Bachelor Degrees and Post Graduate Studies.

The majority of the participants within both cohorts had obtained a bachelor degree (73.81% of first-year participants, 82.05% of second-year). Some had completed postgraduate studies (14.29% and 10.26% respectively) and a small group (11.90% and 7.69% respectively) entered ITE via a Trade Certificate pathway. See Figure 9.

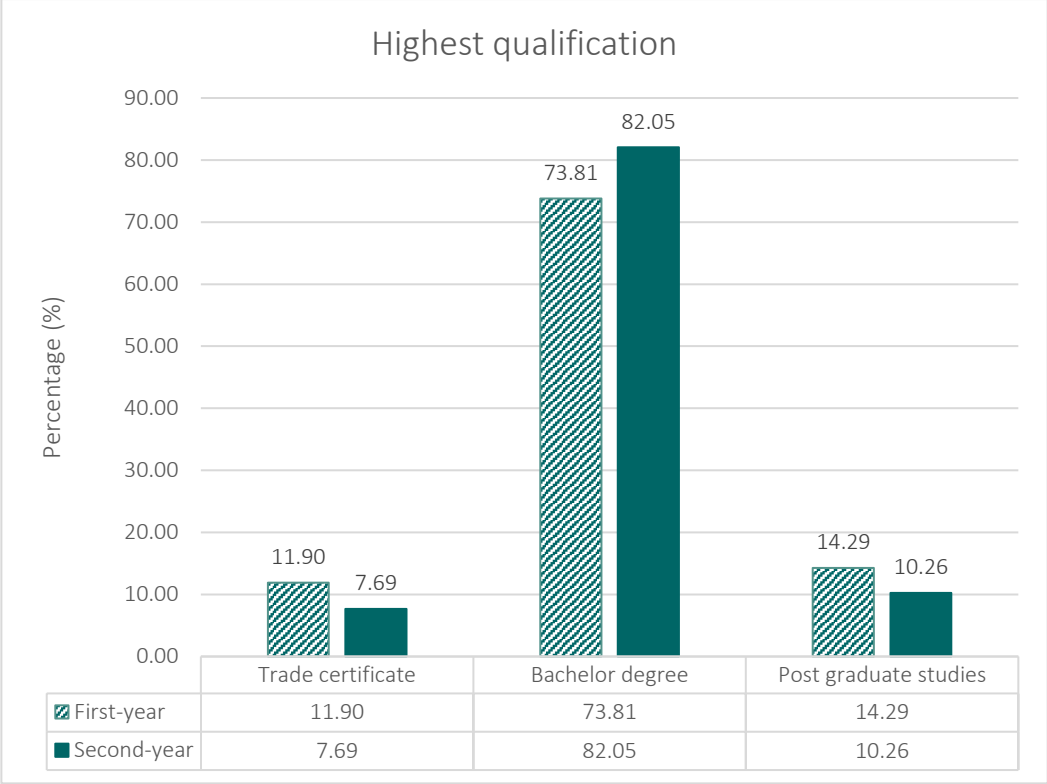



*Figure 9*. Prior to your enrolment in the Bachelor of Teaching degree at the University of Tasmania, what was the highest level of educational qualification you had completed? (Item 3).

Entering ITE via a trade certificate pathway requires applicants to satisfy additional criteria, including information about applicants' work histories and their capacity for tertiary study. Extra justification and documentation required for this admission process was difficult to navigate for some participants. This process also led to some applicants being required to complete additional preparation units for tertiary study, as Sue discovered;

> I did find difficulties finding where to go when you've only got this much experience…what are the avenues for me to be able to get to where I want to go? I found out…there was this opportunity to go and do a bridging year and then go that extra step.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

### 4.4.4 In what field of study did you obtain your highest qualification? (Item 4)

Creative Arts (first-year 29.27%, second-year 38.89%) and the Arts and Humanities (31.71% and 33.33% respectively) categories constituted the majority of the responses to this item. Both the professions (first-year 17.07%, second-year 11.11%) and trades (12.20%and 8.33% respectively) categories yielded similar results to each other. The sciences (5.56%and 4.88%) and the service industry (4.88% and 2.78%) fields were least represented. See Figure 10.

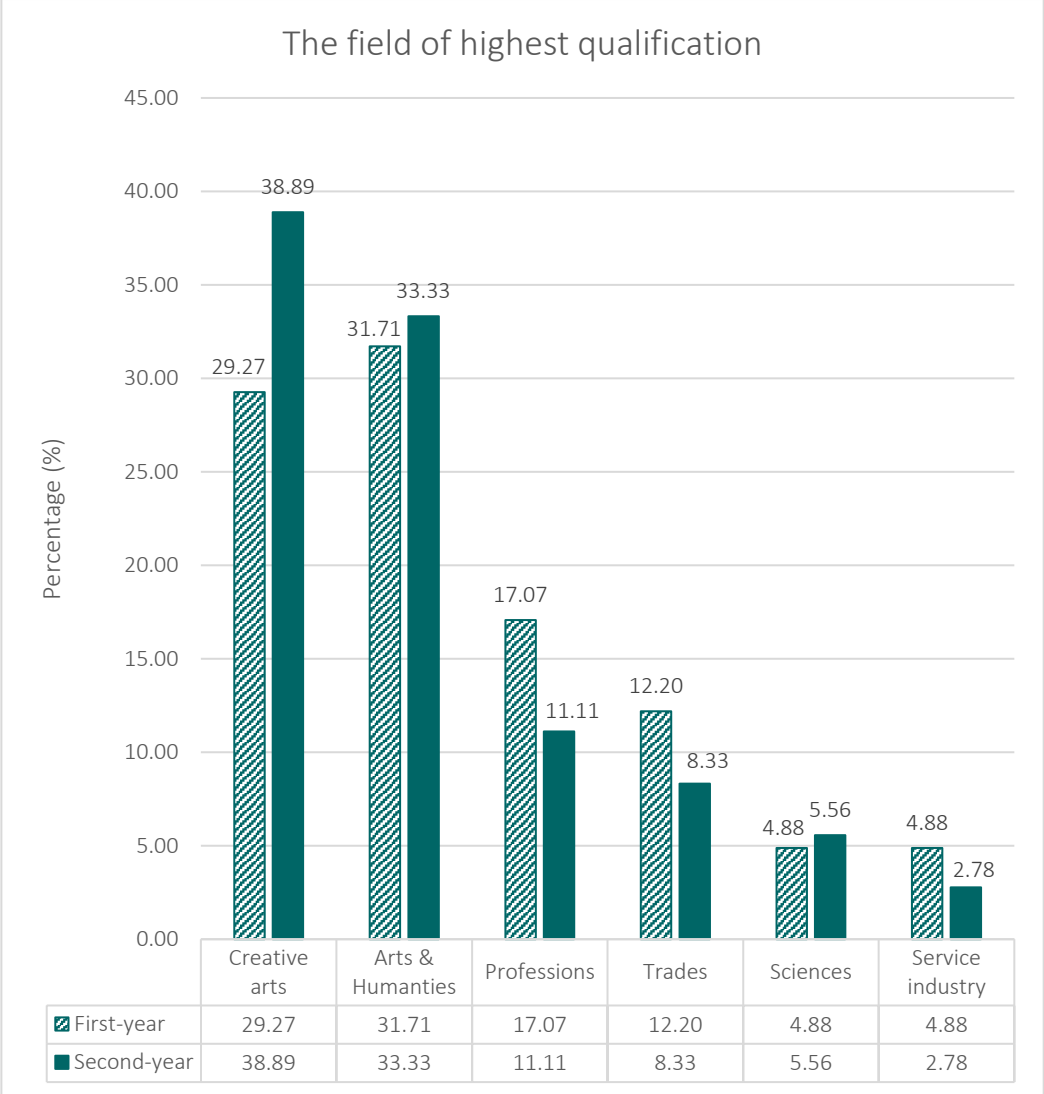



*Figure 10.* In what field of study did you obtain your highest qualification? (Item 4).

Sarah, a first-year pre-service teacher considered her employment options after completing a Bachelor of Arts with majors in English and History. She discussed her future employment options with a former teacher who suggested an education pathway, which she recounted;

> I didn't really have a degree that was sort of worth anything in the real world. [He] helped me decide to do it [teaching]…not because I didn't feel like I had another option but just sort of tap into the skills I already had and the feelings about the area that I already had.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Jessica also felt her employment options were limited by her initial degree and needed to utilise her educational investment in some way, where she simply stated;

> …there wasn't a whole lot else I could think of to do with my Bachelor of Arts.
>
> (Jessica, Pre-PE, First-year)

### 4.4.5 Intended teaching location (Item 5)

Data showed that 41.03% of second-year participants intended to remain in Tasmania while another third anticipating teaching elsewhere in Australia and overseas (33.33%). The first-year cohort were casting a wider net with employment across Australia or overseas reported as their highest priority (61.90%) while only 19.05% thought that they would commence teaching in Tasmania. A small percentage (first-year 4.76%, second-year 7.69%) reported their intentions to teach exclusively overseas. See Figure 11.

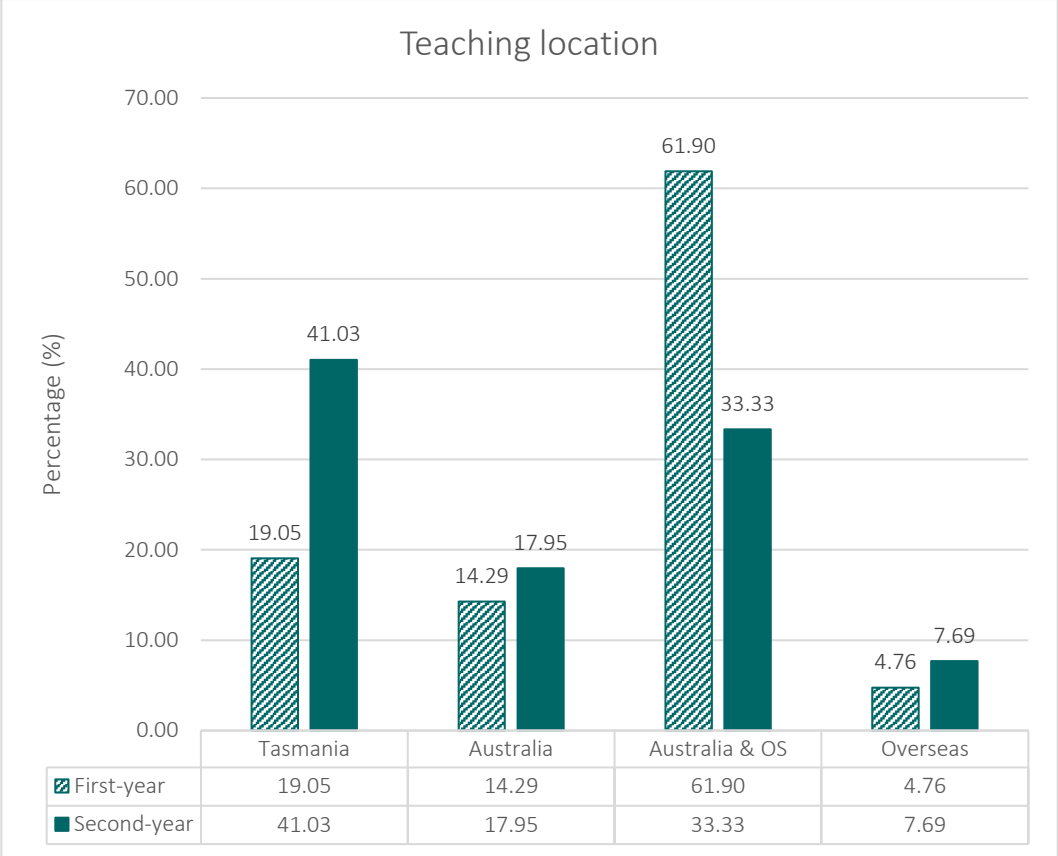



*Figure 11*. Where do you intend to teach? (Item 5).

Both first- and second-year pre-service teachers reported willingness to commence teaching outside of Tasmania, both nationally and internationally. Nigel, a second-year pre-service teacher reflected this sentiment, where he stated;

> I wouldn't mind going to Canada when I graduate, that's a very strong possibility.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Forty-one percent of the second-year cohort (41.03%) indicated their desire to remain living and working in Tasmania. Although this was Sue's preference, with a young son well established in school and family close by for support, she expressed her personal concern regarding her ability to compete for local positions. Sue suggested that if she couldn't obtain teaching employment in

Tasmania, she would have to consider other employment, including those out of the teaching field in order to remain in the local region.

> I find it really hard to believe that everyone is going to get a job when they leave. So a challenge for me will be actually to do something with this [degree] when I'm finished…finding a job will be a challenge.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Some participants were strategic about teaching in the local area and had committed to year level and subject specialisations to facilitate this;

> I haven't picked high school teaching for now…I would only want to teach dance and…you can't do that in Tasmania…you have to go to the mainland. I am focusing on primary school.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First year).

### 4.4.6 Which level do you intend to teach? (Item 6)

The B. Teach program attracted applicants with previous work experience or fields of expertise most suited to secondary school (Year 7 to Year 10) or college (Year 11 to Year 12) contexts. This was reflected in the reported preferences for secondary school and college level teaching (first-year 66.67%, second-year 78.95%). See Figure 12.

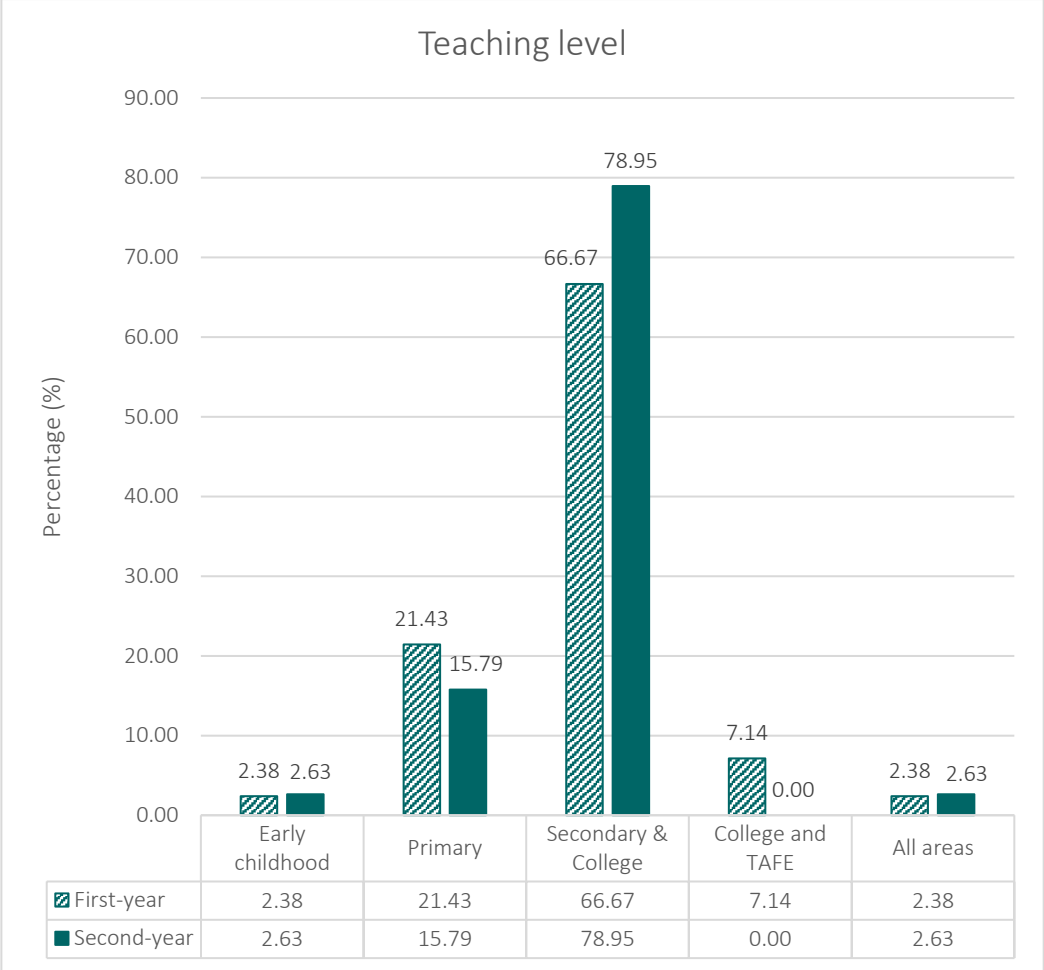



*Figure 12*. Which level do you intend to teach? (Item 6).

Very few participants within each cohort (first-year 2.38%, second-year 2.63%) intended to teach from early childhood settings through to post-secondary college and TAFE, despite the qualification allowing them to do so. A low percentage (first-year 2.38%, second-year 2.63%) also reported their intention to only teach within early childhood settings.

Participants, such as Judy and Sue, reported strong intentions about the levels that they intended to teach. Participants varied in their descriptions of preferred teaching, with some selecting broad categories like 'primary' or 'secondary' while others were more explicit in their preferences, for example;

> Secondary science. Preferably the older kids, years 11 and 12.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

> That's the area I am interested in, middle primary to College MDT.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Other respondents were more open to a range of possibilities and were hopeful that their Professional Experience school placements may provide shape their perspectives:

> Well, I'd like to do a bit of everything, to be honest. I think I have to do secondary mainly but if the opportunity comes up I'd love to do primary as well.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

> Ideally, I'd like to be a college teacher I think, but at the same time I do love the younger grades.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

William was more philosophical. Although he had nominated secondary science as his preferred year level and specialist area, there was a particular 'type' of student he preferred to work with rather than a particular grade level:

> Those that are at an age where they actually want to learn something and are curious and interested.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

### 4.4.7 Do you have a specialist area? (Item 7)

The term 'specialist' is frequently used in reference to curriculum subject areas as opposed to early childhood, primary or secondary (Thornton, 1995, p. 5). As such, those intending to teach early childhood and primary (first-year 23.81%, second-year 18.72%) were similar to the proportion of participants who did not report having a subject specialisation (first-year 26.19%, second-year 23.08%). See Figure 13.

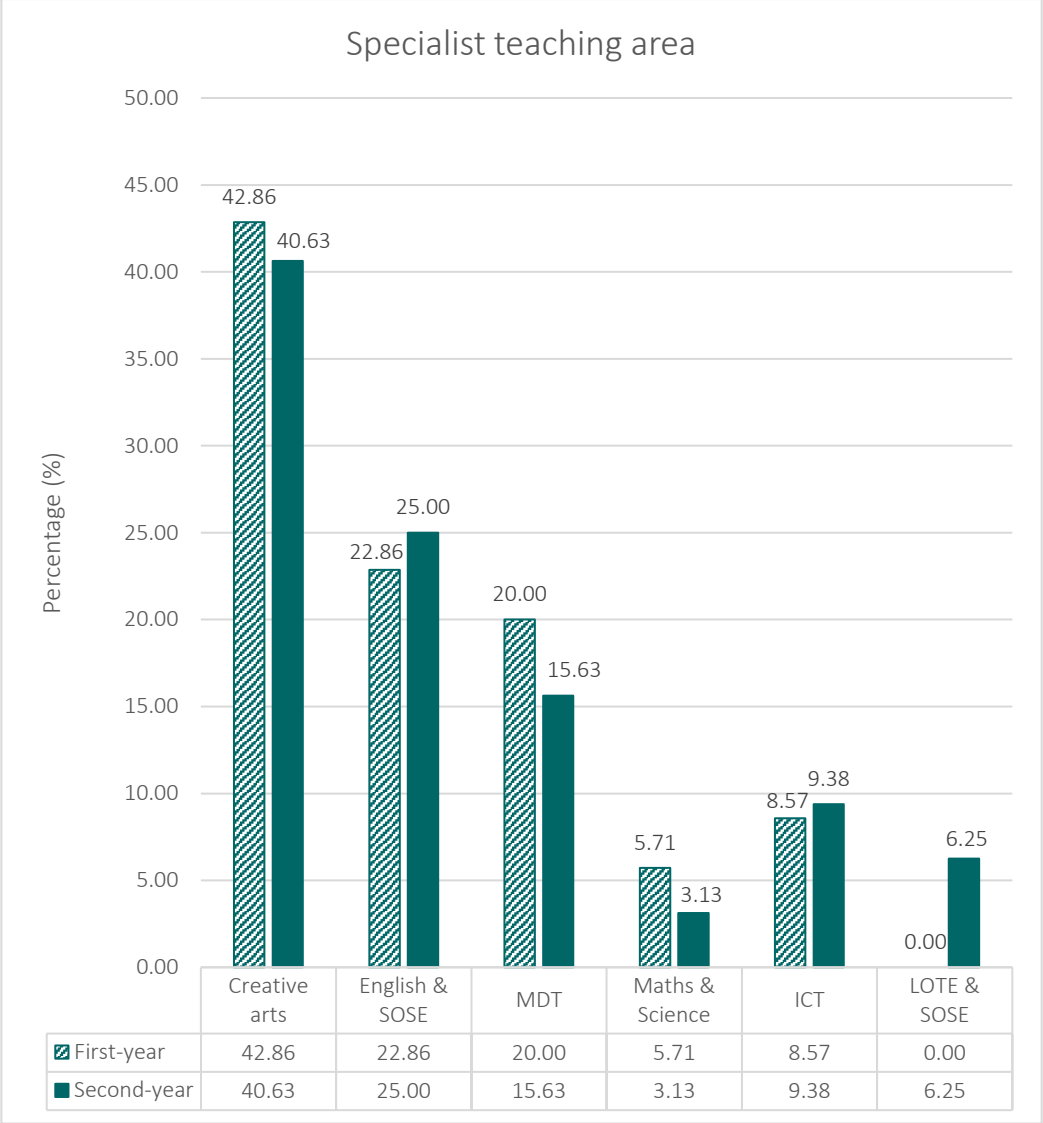



*Figure 13*. Do you have a specialist area? Please specify (Item 7).

Of the 81 participants, 61 (first-year 73.81%, second-year 76.92%) reported an existing area of specialisation and listed a total of 22 different stand-alone or combined specialisations incorporating: Art, Asian Studies, Design and Technology, Drama, English, Food Technology, French, History, Information Technology, Japanese, Mathematics, Music, Science and SOSE. These specialisations were then aligned with six of the key learning areas within the Australian Curriculum. They were then recoded as Creative Arts, English & Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE), MDT, Mathematics and Science, ICT, Language other than English (LOTE) and SOSE. Where participants provided a

number of key learning areas, the first named was taken as the main specialisation.

Pre-service teachers intending to teach subjects such as Creative Arts (first-year 42.86%, second-year 40.63%), English & SOSE (first-year 22.86%, second-year 25.00%) and LOTE & SOSE (first-year 0.00%, second-year 6.25%), collectively accounted for the majority of the subject specialisations indicated in the data (first-year 65.72%, second-year 71.88%); not surprisingly these were similar percentages of participants that nominated Creative Arts, Arts and Humanities as their field of study in which their highest qualification was obtained (first-year 60.98%, second-year 72.22%). The remaining professions, trades, sciences and service backgrounds with a direct correlation with secondary subjects such as Business Studies, Science, Materials Design & Technology, Home Economics or Food Technology comprised the remainder of both cohorts.

For some students, possessing a specialisation that correlated to a specific curriculum area had influenced their original selection of secondary and college teaching pathways where they believed these specialisations had utility. Despite this, they also demonstrated an awareness that possession of a nominated specialisation did not guarantee employment in that area, as Sarah recalled;

> We were told from our very first SOSE lesson that it is a huge range and there's no guarantee that you'll be teaching your specialisation.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

This uncertainty around expertise and teaching roles was emphasised by Kim's Professional Experience allocation, where she outlined;

> My undergrad [degree] was Drama…I'm doing English and drama….they joined English and SOSE under the banner of humanities…so I've been teaching geography.
>
> (Kim, Post-PE2, Second-year)

### 4.4.8 What type of school do you hope to secure employment? (Item 8)

Data revealed that the majority of pre-service teachers intended to teach exclusively in metropolitan schools (first-year 45.24%, second-year 58.97%). See Figure 14.

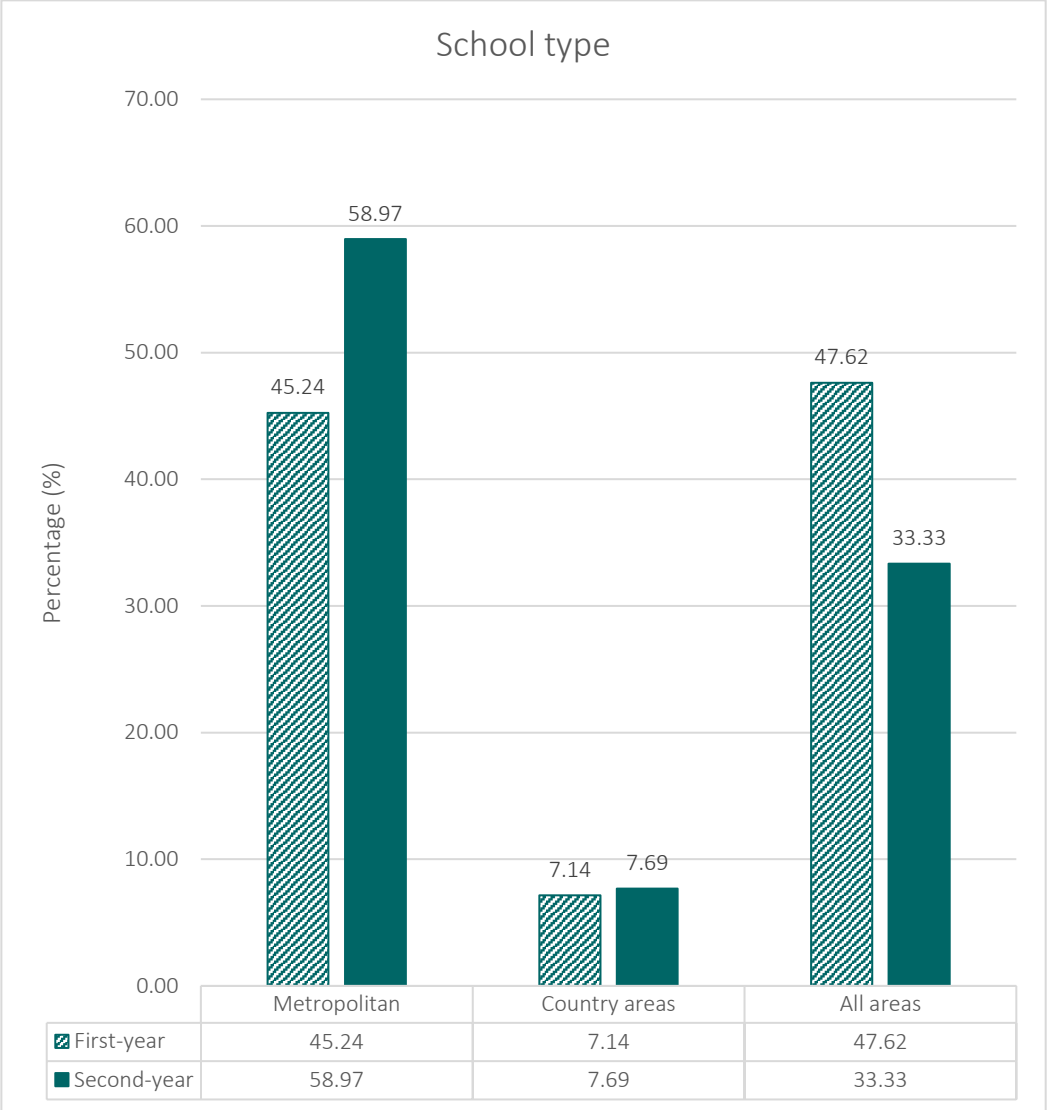



*Figure 14*. What type of school do you hope to secure employment? (Item 8).

Less than 8% of participants across both cohorts wished to work in country areas (first-years 7.14%, second-years 7.69%). Many of these lived in rural areas already and had relocated to Launceston to complete the B. Teach. The remaining participants were prepared to work wherever they could gain employment (first-

years 47.62%, second-years 33.33%). Pre-service teachers such as Nigel preferred only to work in metropolitan schools:

> I live in [Cradle Coast region] now and it's driving me nuts…I know that it's not far off being urban but I feel so isolated and lonely, it's just, I can't handle it up there. I would seriously go nuts if I went any further out.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

### 4.4.9 In what educational system do you hope to secure employment? (Item 9)

For many of the participants (first-year 47.62%, second-year 33.33%) gaining employment in any sector was more important than any strong preferences for a particular system such as Public Education (first-year 45.24%, second-year 58.97%), Catholic Education (first-year 7.14%, second-year 7.69%), or Independent (first-year and second-year 0.00%). See Figure 15.

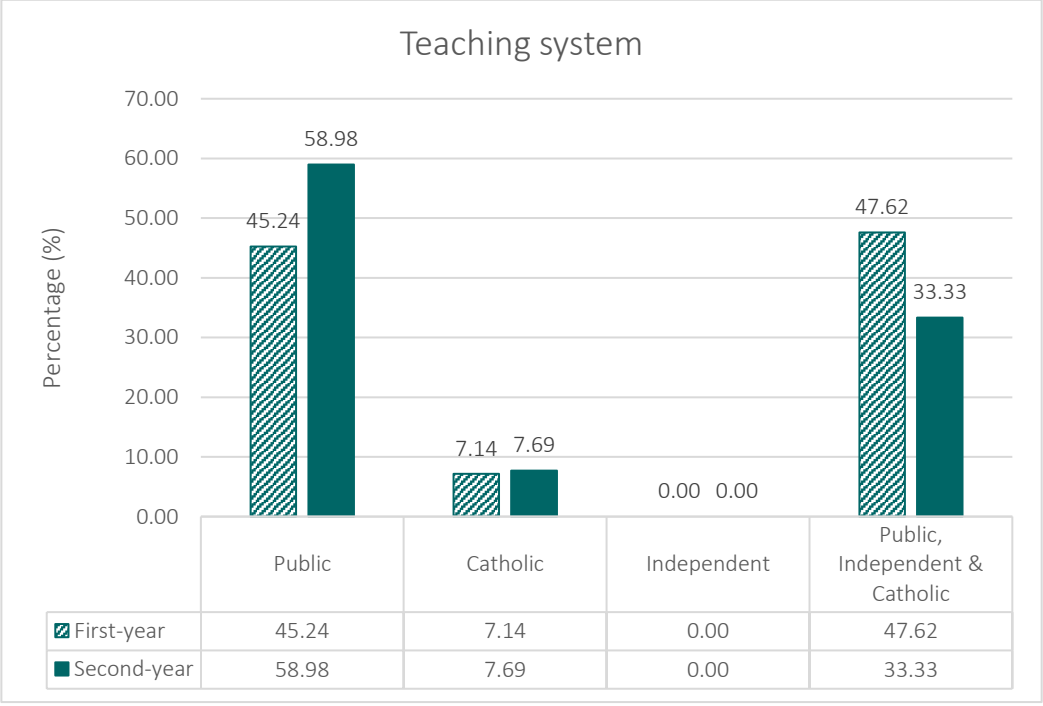



*Figure 15.* In what educational system do you hope to secure employment? (Item 9).

Nigel reported perceived difficulties associated with gaining employment in independent schools and shared his planned approach;

> They suggested getting some experience in state schools first and then maybe getting a rep [reputation], getting at least…some level of permanency…and then work at a private school.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Few participants (first-year 7.14%, second-year 7.69%) nominated Catholic Education as their preferred teaching system. Only 7.41% of all first and second year pre-service teachers reported a preference for Catholic Education although for some, like Emma, teaching within the Catholic system was clearly her preference;

> I went to Catholic schools…I actually got placed [for Professional Experience] in a Catholic primary school so for me that was like, that's going to be good.
>
> (Emma, Post-PE2, First-year)

Conversely, other participants communicated a strong preference for not working in Catholic Education. Despite these reported views, they would do so if it led to employment (for example, for the purpose of a Professional Experience placement or for an ongoing teaching position);

> I'm not Christian…I'm not anti-Christian…I don't believe in it at all so it's just purely a moralistic view that it's a bit double standard to go into a Catholic school…I'm happy to go to church once a week and all that and sort of tongue in cheek [if I had to work in a Catholic school].
>
> (Michael, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Others, such as Michelle, needed to find a way to marry personal ethos with the employment setting;

> I'd have to do a lot of research and find the loopholes for things that I agree with…to be able to teach in that way…it's not impossible but I just prefer not to.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

Joanne highlighted that her lack of understanding of a Catholic school context was responsible for not selecting this as a preferred employment option;

> Probably because I don't know enough about it, my education was a government primary school and an independent secondary school and I guess they're the environments I feel comfortable in.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

For other pre-service teachers, preferences relating to education system were based on well-established priorities, for example;

> I come from a left, politically left upbringing and so I am very supportive of state services and public schooling and hospital systems…I would like to be involved…and work as best as I can within it…be an advocate...
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma acknowledged the benefits of remaining open-minded about her preferred education system.

> I'm also looking forward to getting a taste of what the government schools are like and the other independent schools.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Despite reporting firm ideas about where she would prefer to teach, Kim also indicated that her perceptions were under construction and that she would be open to teaching across systems. These developing ideas contradicted her earlier response of the importance of public education, for example;

> With the private system, I'd be happy to work in a well-resourced, well-funded school…[where] the behaviour of

> the students was more controlled…so I can see advantages to both, for me personally.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

> Personally, I don't care. I mean, private schools have very limited behaviour management issues, very small. The kids there just wanted to learn and I loved it but at the same time like I said there is permanency or more job security in the public sector.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

### 4.5 Research Question 2

Findings are presented in relation to the Research Question 2:

> *What are the initial perceptions, understandings, and beliefs of pre-service teachers about being a classroom teacher and their own professional motivations and aspirations?*

In response to this question, both the quantitative and qualitative data from the initial questionnaire (Parts B and C) were utilised as the primary data source. Qualitative data obtained through face-to-face interviews, classroom observations and weekly journals were used to complement, clarify and triangulate responses where appropriate.

The quantitative data were examined by addressing the results of each of the 38 items pertaining to perceptions and beliefs of the participants regarding the teaching profession (Part B). Results were examined in the sequence in which they appeared in the initial questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, schematic and visual representation of results were utilised to make meaning of the responses obtained.

The results attained from the initial questionnaire: Part B, Items 1-38 and Part C, Items 1-3, are presented to describe the perceptions and beliefs of the pre-service teachers who were enrolled in the B. Teach program at the time of this study. These data were used to explore the initial preconceptions the pre-service teachers held in areas of professional work conditions, family-enabling/supporting needs, working with children and required competencies (professional standards) of classroom teaching. Specifically, participants provided information regarding their understanding of professional work conditions: such as, the rate of pay, the opportunity for professional development and job security (Part B: Items 1-10). Questions relating to pre-service teachers' perceptions about their own family- enabling/supporting needs were posed: such as, the importance of family friendly hours, appeal of school holidays, how the role may assist in their own child's education (Part B: Items 11-16), as well as items pertaining to working with children and the importance of the teacher-student relationship (Part B: Items 17-22). Part B: Items 23-38 related to required competencies of classroom teaching and participants' perceptions about how challenging they anticipated finding elements: such as, interpreting the curriculum, student assessment and inclusion. See Table 20.

Table 20.

*Questionnaire 1, Part B: Key areas of questioning, Items 1-38.*

| Item | Prefix | Topic | Key area |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Understanding of | Rate of pay | Professional work conditions |
| **2** | | Professional development | |
| **3** | | Teaching overseas | |
| **4** | | Job security | |
| **5** | | Career progression | |
| **6** | | Relief teaching | |
| **7** | | Full-time teaching | |
| **8** | | Support structures | |
| **9** | | Public perception | |
| **10** | | Social status of teachers | |
| **11** | Intention to have | Own children | family-enabling/supporting needs |
| **12** | Importance of | Family friendly work hours | |
| **13** | | Take own children to work | |
| **14** | | Assisting own children at school | |
| **15** | | School holidays | |
| **16** | | Substantial income | |
| **17** | Importance of | Working with children | Working with children |
| **18** | | Helping children succeed | |
| **19** | | Sharing knowledge | |
| **20** | | Being a positive role model | |
| **21** | | Providing stability to children | |
| **22** | | Inspiring students | |
| **23** | Perceived level of challenge of | Programming and curriculum | Required competencies |
| **24** | | Student assessment | |
| **25** | | Reporting to parents | |
| **26** | | Inclusive planning | |
| **27** | | Inclusive practice | |
| **28** | | Gifted and talented planning | |
| **29** | | Mandatory reporting | |
| **30** | | Medical emergencies | |
| **31** | | Managing workload | |
| **32** | | Class sizes | |
| **33** | | Staff relationships | |
| **34** | | Parent relationships | |
| **35** | | Student relationships | |
| **36** | | Behaviour management | |
| **37** | | ADHD/ADD | |
| **38** | | Violence | |

This information provided the benchmark by which future comparative analyses were made. Significant relationships between key variables (Items 1-38) were identified through statistical analyses and are expanded upon below, followed by

a summary of the findings related to Research Question 2 prior to the conclusion of the chapter.

### 4.5.1 Professional work conditions (Items 1-10)

Items 1 to 10 (Part B) of the initial questionnaire examined existing perceptions of both first and second-year pre-service teachers regarding professional work conditions including: rates of pay (Item 1), the opportunity for professional development (Item 2), the ability to teach overseas (Item 3), job security (Item 4), career progression (Item 5), relief teaching (Item 6), full-time employment (Item 7), availability of support structures for teachers (Item 8), public perception of the profession (Item 9) and the social status of teachers (Item 10).

#### 4.5.1.1 I am fully aware of the current rate of pay for teachers (Item 1)

The majority of participants agreed they had a sound understanding of the rate of pay for teachers (Item 1) (first-year 61.90%, second-year 69.23%). For both first and second-year cohorts, approximately 20% (first-year 26.19%, second year 20.51%) indicated they had limited, if any, understanding of the current pay rates for teachers and around 11.9% still were unsure of the depth of their understanding regarding the matter. See Figure 16.

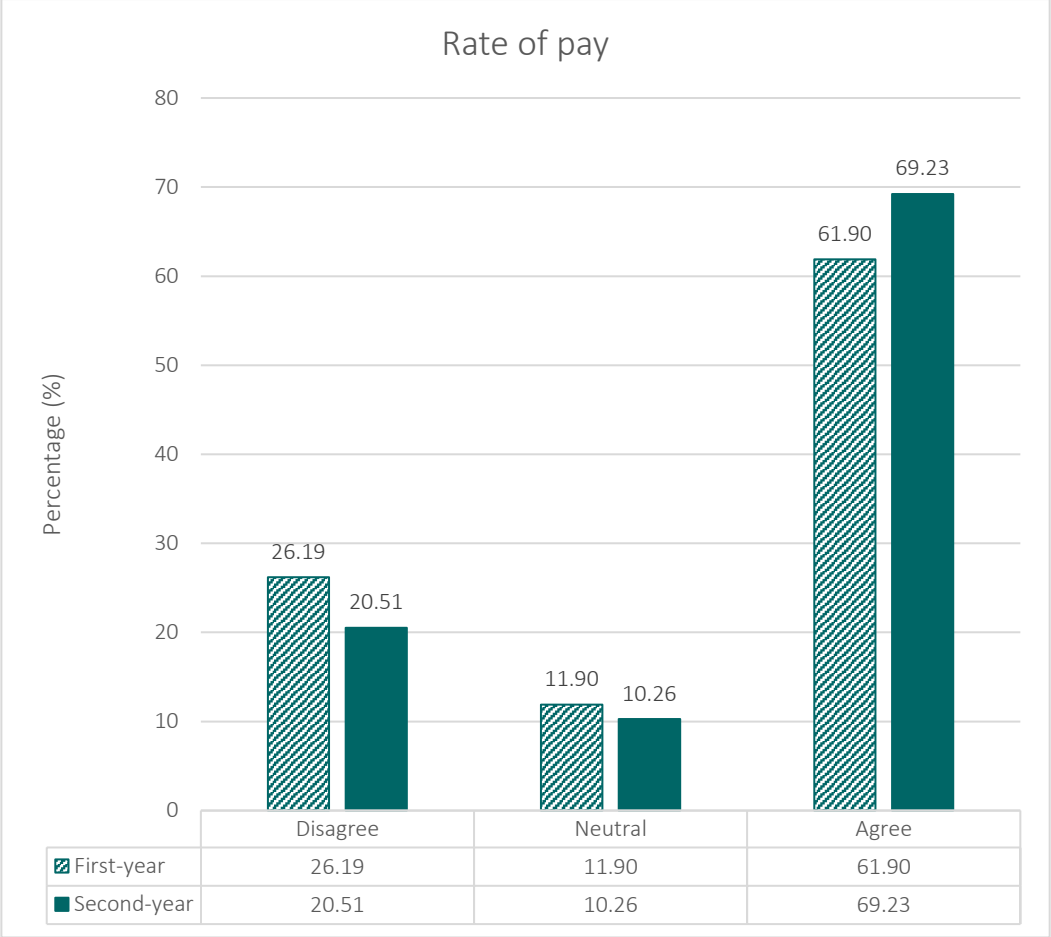



*Figure 16*. I am fully aware of the current rate of pay for teachers (Item 1).

Analysis of both first-year and second-year cohort responses indicated a significant association between their understanding of pay rates and a number of other professional work conditions, including family-enabling/supporting needs and required competencies for teaching. See Table 21.

Table 21.

*Significant associations - understanding of pay rates.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Professional development** | $X^2(4) = 16.384$ p = 0.05* | $LX^2(4) = 22.512$ p = 0.000** |
| **Full-time teaching** | $LX^2(4) = 12.884$ p = 0.012* | $LX^2(4) = 4.144$ p = 0.007** |
| **Relief teaching** | $LX^2(4) = 15.103$ p = 0.004** | No significant association |
| **Support** | No significant association | $LX^2(4) = 9.925$ p = 0.042* |
| **Welfare** | $LX^2(4) = 10.907$ p = 0.028* | No significant association |
| **Own child** | No significant association | $X^2(2) = 8.017$ p = 0.018* |
| **IEP's** | No significant association | $LX^2(4) = 11.183$ p = 0.025* |
| **Disabilities** | No significant association | $LX^2(4) = 14.883$ p = 0.005** |
| **Workload** | No significant association | $LX^2(4) = 14.409$ p = 0.006** |
| **Staff relationships** | No significant association | $LX^2(4) = 12.428$ p = 0.014* |

$X^2$= Chi square statistic, $LX^2$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

The first-year participants' understanding of pay rates aligned logically with an understanding of full-time and relief teaching (first-year $p<0.05$) both of which result in the provision of an income for the beginning teacher. Although no relief teaching association was observed for second-year participants, consideration of pay rates and professional development (first-year $p<0.05$, second-year $p<0.01$), reflected an awareness of working and progressing successfully in their new career. This was reflected in the responses of second-year pre-service teachers who reported an awareness of available support structures once employed in the school setting (second-year $p<0.05$).

Second-year pre-service teachers recorded a number of additional significant associations, highlighting the complex nature of work-life balance within the education field. Statistical analysis identified a relationship between an

understanding of pay rates and the intention to have own children for second-year participants, was significant ($\chi^2(2) = 8.017$, $p < 0.05$).

During follow-up interviews, remuneration was highlighted by some pre-service teachers as an influential factor as they were assessing the viability of a transition to the teaching profession. For some, the financial reward was more beneficial than their previous employment and was considered a step forward. For others, this was not so and although the financial remuneration may have been taken into account it was not the determining factor for making the change. For example;

> [I] first looked at teaching which was about six years ago. [Remuneration] was a lot less…going to a teacher wage, I'm dropping about $35,000 a year…people can't understand why I would want to do that.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Simon also commented that others within the program may have made similar sacrifices, as he explained;

> There are a lot of guys in my class [who]…have been working in…the corporate area for 10 years or more so [they are]…probably be taking the same sort of money pay cut.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie also reflected on the contributions teachers made to others and contrast that against the relatively low wages of teachers, particularly in light of her remuneration within her previous career in a corporate bank;

> I would think I would be paid more as a teacher because I am making more of a difference to more people…a longer term difference…governments… can't [pay teachers what they are worth]…so the lifestyle…sort of justifies some of the wages.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

Judy also talked about the pay and conditions of teachers, observed in the media;

> I've heard things of course on the news where they talk about the low working conditions and the low pay.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

Performance-based pay for teachers had been a topical issue prior to and at the time of data collection (Ingvarson, 2007). This drew participants' attention to the issue of pay rates and although it potentially had increased pre-service teachers' awareness, it had also caused concern, as William identified;

> I've only got it from the newspaper articles…but they talk about paying teachers based on performance. It just left me dumbstruck. What's performance? Do all kids have to pass? And do teachers get paid on how many kids pass?
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Although financial rewards were mentioned only on three occasions throughout the interview process, other participants also indicated that the career change into teaching was to assist in the financial provision for family and children. This reflected the variability of pathways into teaching for these cohorts. Sue, a second-year pre-service teacher, chose to enter teaching for a number of pragmatic reasons, only one of which was financial and yet profoundly important, as she emphasised;

> I explained [to my son]…that I am doing this so that we can…have a house one day.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

#### 4.5.1.2 I am fully aware of the opportunity for professional development in the teaching profession (Item 2).

A high percentage of second-year participants (61.54%) were aware of the availability of professional development opportunities in the teaching profession. See Figure 17.

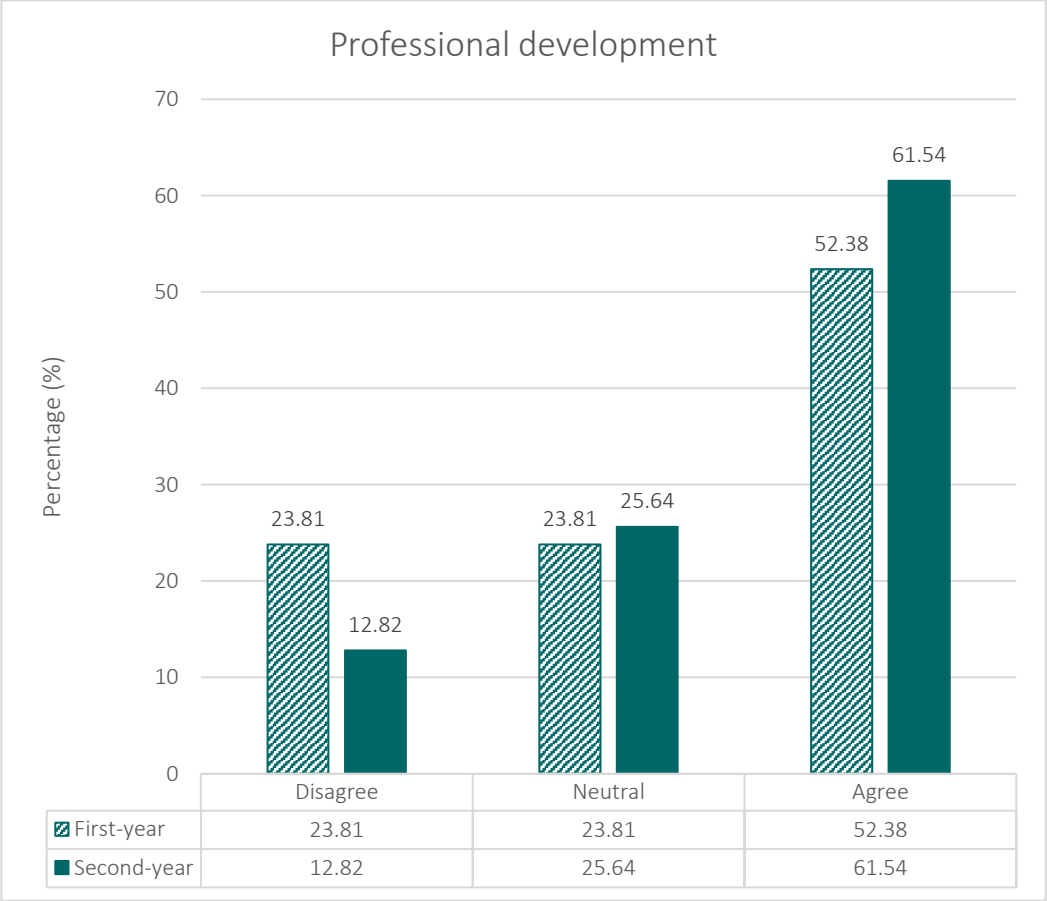



*Figure 17.* Understanding of professional development opportunities (Item 2).

At least half of the first and second-year cohorts were aware that professional development opportunities existed for teachers (first-year 52.38 %, second-year 61.54 %). As the second-year pre-service teachers had already participated in at least one Professional Experience school placement, many would have discovered, if not been involved in, professional development whilst in a school setting, which was certainly the case for Kim;

> My first day here was a professional development day…I'm being exposed to all that stuff.
>
> (Kim, During-PE2, First-year)

Some pre-service teachers, like Joanne, prioritised professional learning as a rewarding and attractive element of teaching;

> I think it [PD] will [be important] and I like that side of the teaching career because you are always trying to improve yourself and reflecting on 'Am I doing the best job?' or, 'Could I do it better?'
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

William took this further, highlighting that his motivation for teaching was less about working with learners and more about his own professional development;

> Rather than actually wanting to teach people. It was more about wanting to learn about learning…it was more for me than anything.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Conversely, Michelle, a visual arts specialist, suggested that professional development in specialist areas gave skills and insight into the teaching of the subject that could lead to better student outcomes as well as give credibility to the profession in the eyes of the learners.

> I think [that] being an art teacher [means] it's essential that you're a practising artist too. They [students] can see that you're an artist and therefore you've got a lot to offer them…you never stop learning about the subject that you are teaching so you're always increasing your knowledge of that area…
>
> (Michelle, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Analysis of both first and second-year participants' results indicated significant associations between their understandings of professional development

opportunities within the school setting and key elements of the teaching profession. See Table 21.

Except for associations between an awareness of PD and full-time teaching, all other significant relationships were different for first and second-year participants. Statistically significant associations for the first-year cohort, expressed through interviews, included the need for additional learning to mitigate the impact of a lack of knowledge when managing such things as career progression (first-year $p<0.05$), accessing support as a beginning teacher (first-year $p<0.05$), assisting children to succeed (first-year $p<0.05$), working with gifted and talented students (first-year $p<0.01$), dealing with child welfare concerns (first-year $p<0.05$), managing behaviour (first-year $p<0.05$) and dealing with ADHD in the classroom (first-year $p<0.05$).

The second-year cohort, in contrast, indicated associations with elements they found challenging within whilst Professional Experience placments such as student assessment (second-year $p<0.05$) and managing workload (second-year $p<0.05$). Obtaining full-time employment, especially in a period of perceived limited job availability for graduating teachers in Tasmania, was also of concern for the second-year pre-service teachers (second-year $p<0.01$). See Table 22.

Table 22.

*Significant associations - understanding of professional development.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Career progression** | $X^2(4) = 12.728$ p = 0.013* | No significant association |
| **Full-time teaching** | $LX^2(4) = 10.180$ p = 0.038* | $LX^2(4) = 13.169$ p = 0.010** |
| **Support** | $LX^2(4) = 10.024$ p = 0.040* | No significant association |
| **Assisting children to succeed** | $LX^2(4) = 11.429$ p = 0.022* | No significant association |
| **Assessment** | No significant association | $LX^2(4) = 10.794$ p = 0.029* |
| **Gift and talented** | $LX^2(4) = 16.245$ p = 0.003** | No significant association |
| **Welfare** | $LX^2(4) = 12.007$ p = 0.017* | No significant association |
| **Workload** | No significant association | $LX^2(4) = 13.070$ p = 0.011* |
| **Behaviour** | $LX^2(4) = 11.755$ p = 0.019* | No significant association |
| **ADHD** | $LX^2(4) = 10.387$ p = 0.034* | No significant association |

$X^2$= Chi square statistic, $LX^2$ = Likelihood ratio; p value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

#### 4.5.1.3 I am able to use my teaching qualifications to easily obtain work overseas, should I choose to (Item 3).

It is possible to utilise Australian teaching qualifications to teach overseas (Item 3). It is anecdotally understood that Australian graduate teachers are highly regarded and are targeted by employers and recruitment agencies for overseas work. This was reflected in Nigel's comments, where he stated;

> You go over to England and they'll snap you [up], they love Australian teachers over there for some reason.
> (Nigel, Post – PE2, Second-year)

This perception about teaching overseas is reflected in the high frequency of pre-service teachers in both first-year and second-year groups (88.10 % and 79.49 % respectively) indicating they possessed a strong understanding of their ability to teach overseas once qualified. See Figure 18.

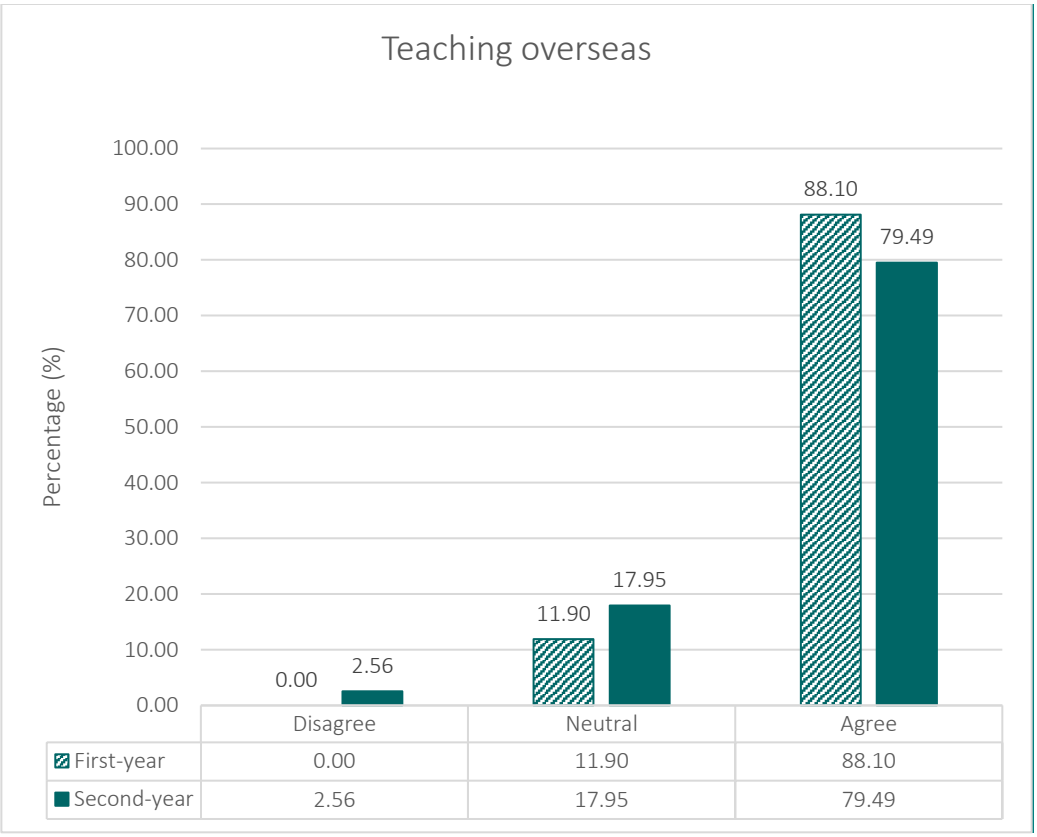



*Figure 18*. I am able to use my teaching qualifications to easily obtain work overseas, should I choose to (Item 3).

Common to both first-year and second-year participants was the significant association between their understanding of teaching overseas and career progression opportunities. See Table 23.

Table 23.

*Significant associations - understanding of teaching overseas.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Career progression** | $x^2(2) = 6.610$ p = 0.037* | $_{LX}^2(4) = 11.087$ p = 0.026* |
| **Full-time teaching** | $x^2 (2) = 11.351$ p = 0.003** | No significant association |
| **Relief teaching** | $x^2 (2) = 7.568$ p = 0.023** | No significant association |
| **Support** | $x^2 (2) = 7.568$ p = 0.023** | No significant association |
| **Family friendly hours** | $x^2 (2) = 6.735$ p = 0.034* | No significant association |
| **Assisting own children** | No significant association | $_{LX}^2(4) = 13.722$ p = 0.008** |
| **Helping children to succeed** | $x^2 (1) = 2.906$ p = 0.088* | No significant association |
| **Sharing knowledge** | $x^2 (1) = 7.580$ p = 0.006** | No significant association |
| **Being a positive role model** | $x^2 (1) = 7.568$ p = 0.006** | No significant association |
| **Providing Guidance** | No significant association | $x^2 (4) = 23.343$ p = 0.000** |
| **Welfare** | No significant association | $_{LX}^2(4) = 13.613$ p = 0.009** |
| **Behaviour** | No significant association | $_{LX}^2(4) = 9.861$ p = 0.043* |

$x^2$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^2$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

First-year participants, who recorded a greater understanding of utilising their qualification to teach overseas, indicated associations with full-time teaching

(first-year $p<0.01$). Similar associations were identified for relief teaching (first-year $p<0.01$), support structures for teachers (first-year $p<0.01$) and family friendly hours (first-year $p<0.05$). Helping children succeed (first-year $p<0.05$), sharing knowledge (first-year $p<0.01$), and being a positive role model (first-year $p<0.01$) were also showed a significant association with perceptions of teaching abroad.

#### 4.5.1.4 I am fully aware of the level of stability and job security of the teaching profession (Item 4).

Item 4 of the initial questionnaire sought pre-service teacher's level of awareness in relation to teaching providing future job security. See Figure 19.

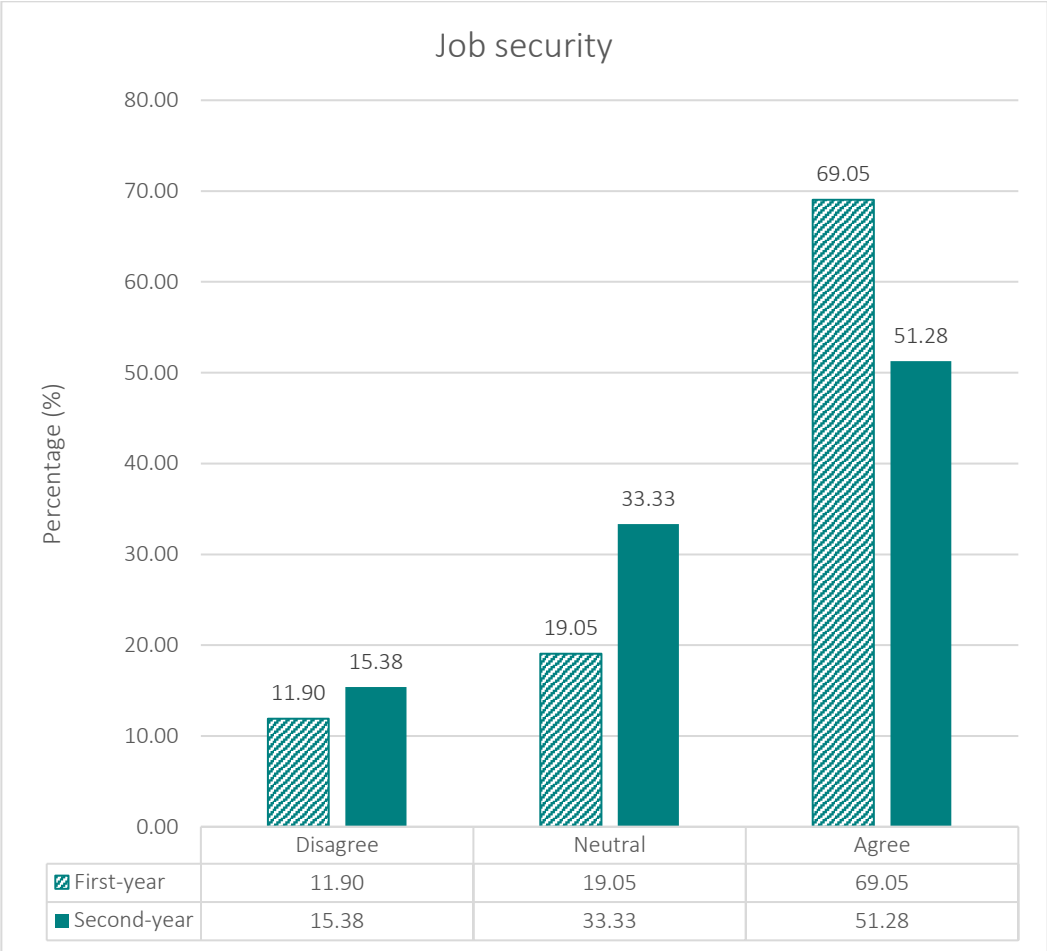



*Figure 19*. I am fully aware of the level of stability and job security of the teaching profession (Item 4).

The results indicate that 69.05% of first-year pre-service teachers perceived they possessed a sound understanding of job security. The reduced agreement of 51.28% found within the second-year cohort reflected an awareness that jobs may not be secure, rather than being evidence of a lack of understanding. The increased neutral response of 33.33% indicated this rise in the uncertainty about securing a job after graduation and the elevated 15.38% disagreement suggested that by the second year of the ITE program more pre-service teachers felt that teaching jobs may not be available at all.

Kim, a first-year pre-service teacher, acknowledged that the consideration of job security played a part in her decision to enrol in the B. Teach program, suggesting that the teaching, in her mind, came with inherit job security;

> Definitely, job security is an aspect.
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michael expressed a lack of concern about job security, suggesting that effective practitioners would be employed;

> It's not something that bothers me, job security isn't important if you're in the right job.
> (Michael, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Nigel suggested that particular educational sectors offered more opportunity for permanency and stability, and he was willing to make decisions to create those opportunities for himself;

> Personally, I don't care [where I work]…there is more permanency or more job security in the public sector.
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Michael suggested during interview that being successful in teaching was related to being successful at building positive student-teacher relationships. His view that if you are highly effective in the teaching role you will be highly employable,

was reflected in the data that revealed a strong association between understanding of job security in education and the level of challenge presented by student relationships ($_{LX}^2(4)=14.757$, $p<0.01$). See Table 24.

Table 24.

*Significant associations - understanding of job security.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Family friendly hours** | $_{LX}^2(4)=14.314$<br>p = 0.006** | no significant association |
| **Student relationships** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=14.757$<br>p = 0.005** |

$_{X}^2$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^2$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

In acknowledging his classmates' growing concerns about job security and that teaching jobs were difficult to obtain with few to be had in Tasmania, Nigel provided further insight into the challenges of finding initial employment;

> Everyone's freaking out about that… oversupply seems to only be in Tasmania...most people didn't realise how bad it was until we started.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Nigel also suggested that the job deficit would disadvantage a particular type of graduate teacher rather than all teachers across demographic and preferential indicators;

> I've heard the other side of it that if you're a male and you're going to teach maths and science you're set. So I'm not that concerned about not getting a job but for female, English SOSE teachers, I mean, they are shitting themselves'.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

First-year participants demonstrated a far more pragmatic view, associating their understandings of job security and how the profession would fit with family-enabling/supporting needs by keeping family friendly hours ($p$<0.01).

#### 4.5.1.5 I am fully aware of the opportunity to advance my career beyond the role of the classroom teacher (Item 5).

Teaching offers a number of career progression pathways beyond the classroom (Item 5). Many of the pre-service teachers (first-year 61.90%, second-year 48.72%) acknowledged they understood at least some of the career progression opportunities available to them. This understanding appeared to develop with exposure to the school setting through Professional Experience (first year 19.05%, second-year 35.90%) but resulted in a shift toward uncertainty in the second-year participants. See Figure 20.

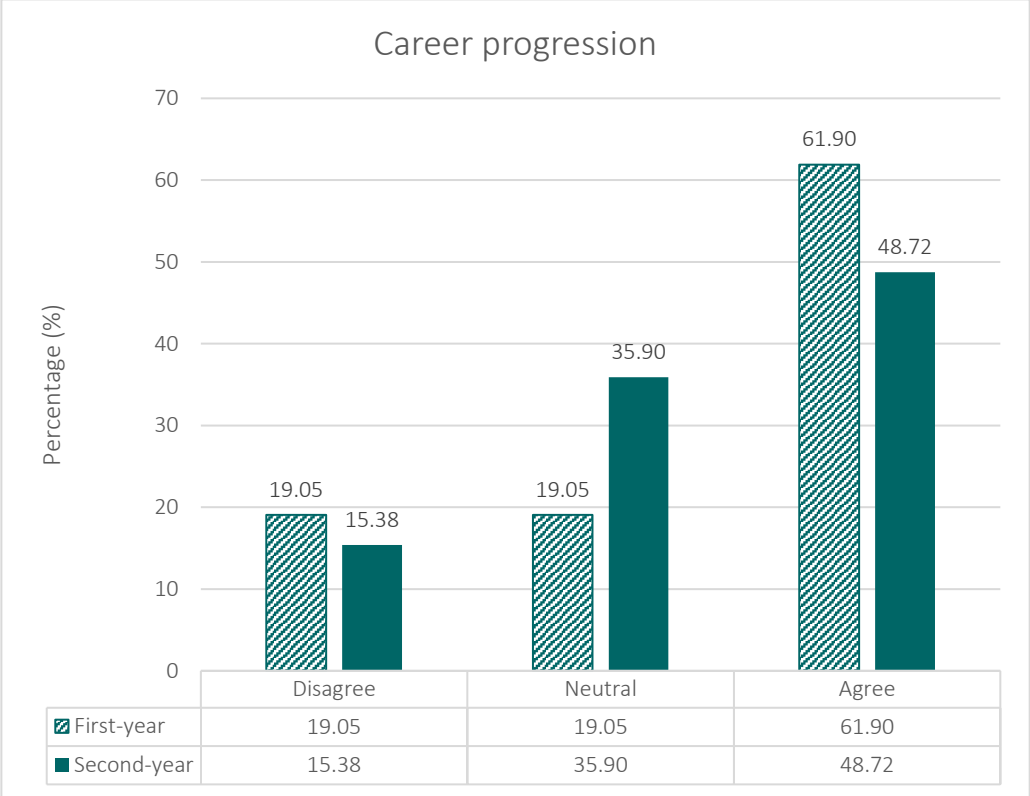



*Figure 20.* I am fully aware of the opportunity to advance my career beyond the role of the classroom teacher (Item 5).

Statistical analysis revealed several associations were identified for first-year pre-service teachers and these were focused on the theme of performing the role well and mitigating perceived challenges. See Table 25.

Analysis of second-year pre-service teachers' responses again demonstrated associations pertaining to support available to them whilst in the role ($p<0.01$) and the perceived social status ($p<0.01$) of teachers.

Table 25.

*Significant associations - understanding of career progression.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Assisting children to succeed** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=9.543$ p = 0.049* | no significant association |
| **Support** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=13.061$ p = 0.011* |
| **Social status** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=15.982$ p = 0.003** |
| **IEP's** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=14.306$ p = 0.006** | no significant association |
| **Gifted and talented** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=17.035$ p = 0.002** | no significant association |
| **Workload** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.613$ p = 0.031* | no significant association |
| **Class size** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.117$ p = 0.039* | no significant association |
| **ADHD** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=13.810$ p = 0.008** | no significant association |

$_{X}^{2}$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^{2}$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

Sue acknowledged the that all jobs have some pathway of progression but it was not realistic to expect, regardless of previous experience, to step across from one profession to another without starting at the bottom;

> You can't just slot yourself in anywhere…and obviously most jobs have a ladder to climb, you've got to start at the bottom and work your way up.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year,)

#### 4.5.1.6 I am well informed regarding the prospects of obtaining a fulltime teaching position shortly after graduation (Item 6).

Pre-service teachers' perceived level of understanding regarding full-time employment was sought through the initial questionnaire (Item 7). Other than second year pre-service teachers' enhanced perspectives of the challenges associated with gaining full-time teaching (46.15 %), a topic they would have had the opportunity to discuss with their Colleague Teacher whilst on Professional Experience, all other results were similar. This result highlighted a consistent spread of perceptions about the likelihood of gaining full-time work. See Figure 21.

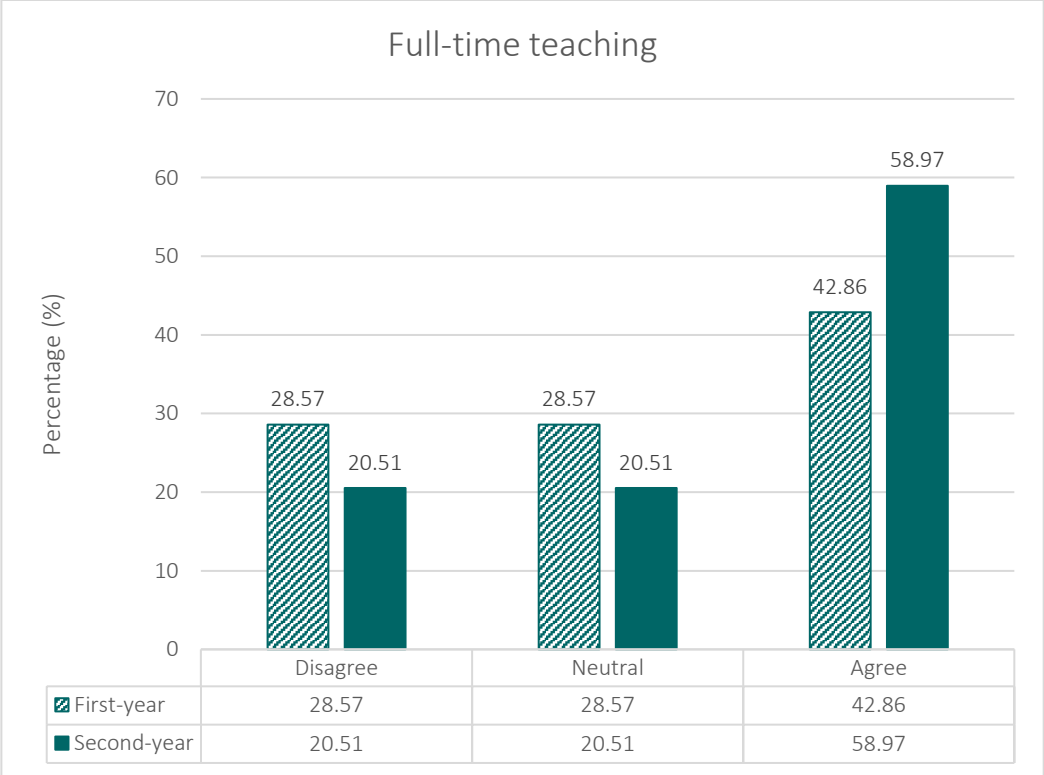



*Figure 21*. I am well informed regarding the prospects of obtaining a fulltime teaching position shortly after graduation (Item 6).

Highly significant associations were found between all pre-service teachers' understandings of full-time and relief teaching (first-year $p<0.01$, second-year $p<0.01$). See Table 26.

Sophie expressed her lack of understanding of full-time teaching and how she might secure ongoing employment.

> I don't know what they are looking for, what the criteria is [sic] or what interview processes is [sic] [or] what you need to go through to be able to get on board in a school.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

First-year participants also indicated a significant association with their understanding of available support structures ($p<0.05$) for teachers and the challenge of a heavy workload ($p<0.05$). Second-year participants demonstrated significant associations with areas identified in the qualitative data as particularly challenging in the classroom; that is, both curriculum ($p<0.05$), and working with students with disabilities ($p<0.05$) as well as with gifted and talents students ($p<0.05$). Their understanding of full-time teaching revealed a highly significant association with their perception of the social status of teachers ($p<0.01$).

Table 26.
*Significant associations - understanding of full-time teaching.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Relief teaching** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=40.825$ p = 0.000** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=36.802$ p = 0.000** |
| **Support** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=11.804$ p = 0.019* | no significant association |
| **Social status** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=15.711$ p = 0.003** |
| **Curriculum** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=9.581$ p = 0.048* |
| **Disabilities** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.167$ p = 0.038* |
| **Gifted and talented** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.639$ p = 0.031* |
| **Workload** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=12.828$ p = 0.012* | no significant association |

$_{X}^{2}$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^{2}$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

#### 4.5.1.7 I am well informed regarding the prospects of obtaining casual/relief teaching work shortly after graduation (Item 7).

Data pertaining to the understanding of relief teaching (Item 7) were similar between year groups. The second-year cohort more consistently reported awareness of the relief teaching process (58.97%) compared to the first-year cohort (42.86%). Identical results were obtained for both first- and second-year groups for both disagree and neutral responses. See Figure 22.

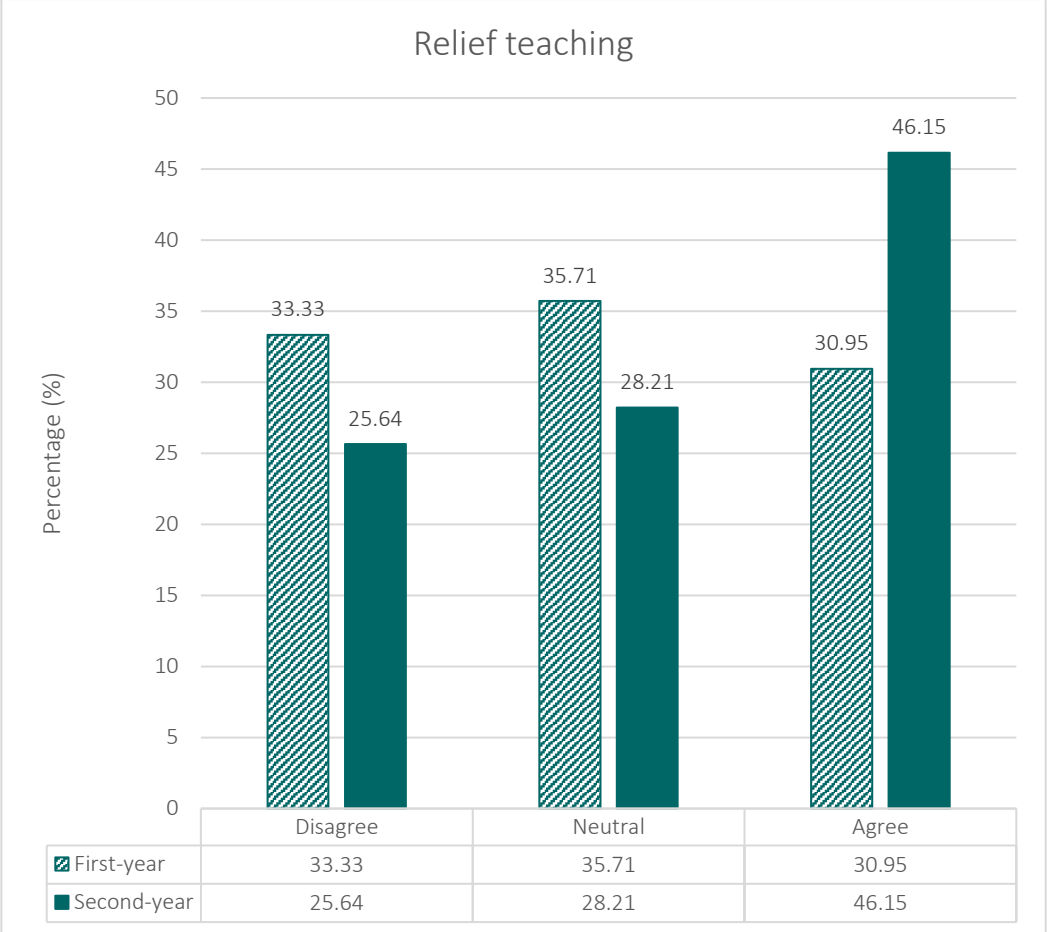



*Figure 22*. I am well informed regarding the prospects of obtaining casual/relief teaching work shortly after graduation (Item 7).

Significant associations between relief teaching and other professional factors continued to follow previous trends for both first- and second-year pre-service teachers, with first-years adopting a more pragmatic view. First-year pre-service teachers' perceptions about relief teaching was significantly associated with the importance of family friendly hours ($p<0.05$), taking own school aged child to work with them ($p<0.05$), heavy workload ($p<0.05$) and large class sizes ($p<0.05$).

Second-year pre-service teachers' responses demonstrated associations between supporting them whilst in the role ($p<0.05$) and the perceived social status ($p<0.05$) of teachers. See Table 27.

Table 27.

*Significant associations - understanding of relief teaching.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Support** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=13.111$ p = 0.011* |
| **Social status** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.989$ p = 0.027* |
| **Family friendly hours** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=7.822$ p = 0.098* | no significant association |
| **Own child to work** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=12.147$ p = 0.016* | no significant association |
| **Workload** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=12.852$ p = 0.012* | no significant association |
| **Class size** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=8.666$ p = 0.070* | no significant association |

$_{X}^{2}$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^{2}$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value (*p*<0.05*, *p*<0.01**)

Nigel began his employment as a teacher's aide. Although studying, he had made himself available for relief work, which pre-service teachers within the Tasmanian context are able to do under some conditions. In this role he experienced the inconsistent nature of the work, which had shaped his perceptions;

> I'm still on the books at [name of school] for relief, but I don't count that because it's just relief, so I don't get it that often.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

#### 4.5.1.8 I am fully aware of the support structures available for beginning teachers, such as counselling and mentoring programs (Item 8).

Data revealed high percentages of both first-year (42.86%) and second-year (51.28%) responses of disagreement in relation to the understanding of support structures (Item 8) available to beginning teachers. Over a quarter of first-year (28.57%) and second-year (15.38%) responses were in agreement indicating the majority of pre-service teachers are uncertain as to what support would be available to them once they commenced teaching. See Figure 23.

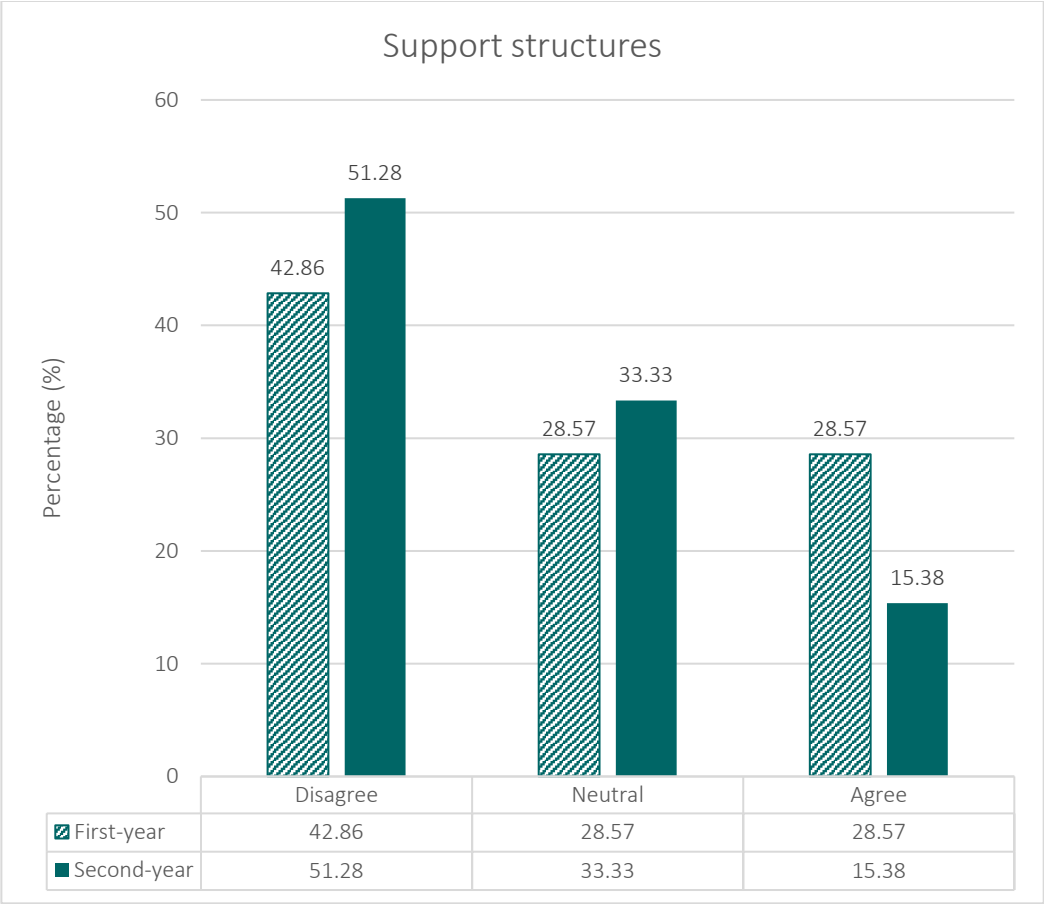



*Figure 23*. I am fully aware of the support structures available for beginning teachers, such as counselling and mentoring programs (Item 8).

First-year pre-service teachers' responses indicated significant associations between their understandings of the availability of support structures and the importance they place on family friendly hours (first-year $p<0.05$, second-year $p<0.05$) and the perceived level of challenge regarding working with students

diagnosed with ADHD (first-year $p<0.01$, second-year $p<0.05$). It is the managing of the challenging aspects of classroom teaching that the second-year participants, such as Assessment ($p<0.01$), IEP's ($p<0.05$), working with students with disabilities ($p<0.01$), large class sizes ($p<0.01$), behaviour ($p<0.05$) and working with students diagnosed with ADHD ($p<0.01$), which were identified as significantly associated with an understanding of support structures. See Table 28.

Table 28.

*Significant associations - understanding of support structures.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Family friendly hours** | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.065$ p = 0.039* | $_{LX}^2(4)=13.111$ p = 0.011* |
| **Assessment** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=16.788$ p = 0.002** |
| **IEP's** | no significant association | $_{X}^2(4)=10.203$ p = 0.037* |
| **Disabilities** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=15.747$ p = 0.003** |
| **Class size** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=14.239$ p = 0.007** |
| **Behaviour** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.640$ p = 0.031* |
| **ADHD** | $_{LX}^2(4)=13.819$ p = 0.008** | $_{X}^2(4)=12.122$ p = 0.016* |

$_{X}^2$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^2$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

Face-to-face interviews yielded no discussion of formal support structures but instead participants highlighted collegial relationships as a critical source of support. For example, Sarah and Nigel observed, within a challenging school, the importance of staff relationships as a means of support for staff and students;

> Having the support of the colleagues…they've [teachers] got really close relationships with all the teachers.
> (Sarah, Post-PE2, Second-year)

#### 4.5.1.9 I have a clear understanding of the general opinion in the wider community of the teaching profession (Item 9).

Pre-service teachers in both the first- and second-year cohorts reported well-developed perspectives of general beliefs held by the public (Item 9) regarding the teaching profession (first-year 71.43 %, second-year 64.10 %). See Figure 24.

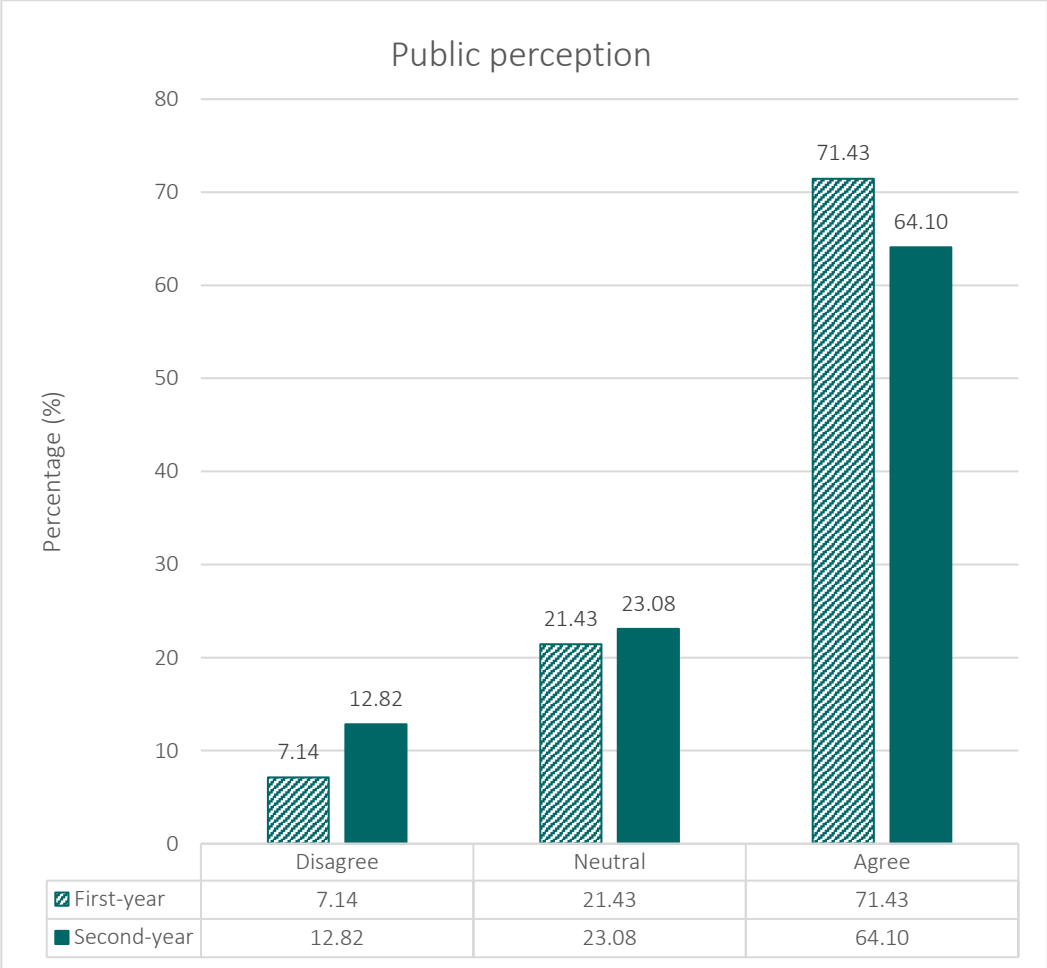



*Figure 24.* I have a clear understanding of the general opinion in the wider community of the teaching profession (Item 9).

The participants shared opinions developed from their personal experience, the media and as a result of an interest in joining the profession. Joanne, Nigel and Sarah suggested that the actual workload of teachers was invisible to the general public, although school 'holidays' were not and this contributed to a poor opinion of teaching and the teacher's role and workload.

> There's a big side of it [teaching] that people don't see and I hate hearing - oh teachers' get three months holiday.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

> I think the general public doesn't realise how much work teachers do…what they earn…they just think...they get a bucket load of money...for not much work…nine to three every day. What really gets at me is when people say…you knock off at three.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

> People who say teachers get it easy, have no idea, none.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Judy was so aware of the negative public perception regarding the teaching profession that she was reluctant to share her career aspirations;

> I was a bit embarrassed actually to say I wanted to be a teacher.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michael also shared how public perception may have shaped people's decisions to consider teaching and enter the B. Teach program in the first place;

> I think a lot of people might be doing it [teaching] because it's…perceived holidays or it's a bludge.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Judy, whose first priority was to be a writer, added to her initial thoughts, the public perception is that becoming a teacher was a fall-back position if you couldn't do what you really wanted;

> Well, they said [teaching is] something that anybody can do really.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michael was convinced that the realities of teaching would be revealed through Professional Experience placements or employment, and, the idea of teaching being easy may be later dispelled.

> I think the first-year experiences out there with kids will shock it out of them.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Jessica had commenced with this perspective but confirmed that her views regarding teaching had changed since enrolling in the B. Teach program;

> I always felt like I would…have lots of time off and…able to be comfortable…[teaching would not be] too strenuous, but it didn't really turn out that way.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Both the first ($p<0.01$) and second-year ($p<0.01$) cohort data indicated highly significant associations with perceived public perception and the resulting social status of teachers. First-year participants' responses revealed additional associations between public perception and the intention to have their own children ($p<0.01$) and to help all children to succeed ($p<0.05$). See Table 29.

Table 29.

*Significant associations - understanding of public perception.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Social status** | $_{LX}^2(4)=23.563$ p = 0.000** | $_{LX}^2(4)=25.002$ p = 0.000** |
| **Intention to have own children** | $x^2(2)=12.600$ p = 0.002** | no significant association |
| **Helping children to succeed** | $x^2(2)=7.700$ p = 0.021* | no significant association |

$x^2$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^2$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

Joanne drew together the ideas of the public perception of teaching and the ability to spend time with one's own family.

> Family is… something that's really important in my life…that's something that I like about the teaching profession…that [sic] gives me the opportunity when I have a family to be able to do things with them.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

#### 4.5.1.10 I have a clear understanding of the 'social status' of teachers in the wider community (Item 10).

Participants provided responses about their understanding of the public perception of teaching that were similar to those about their understanding of the social status of teachers within the profession (Item 10). See Figure 25.

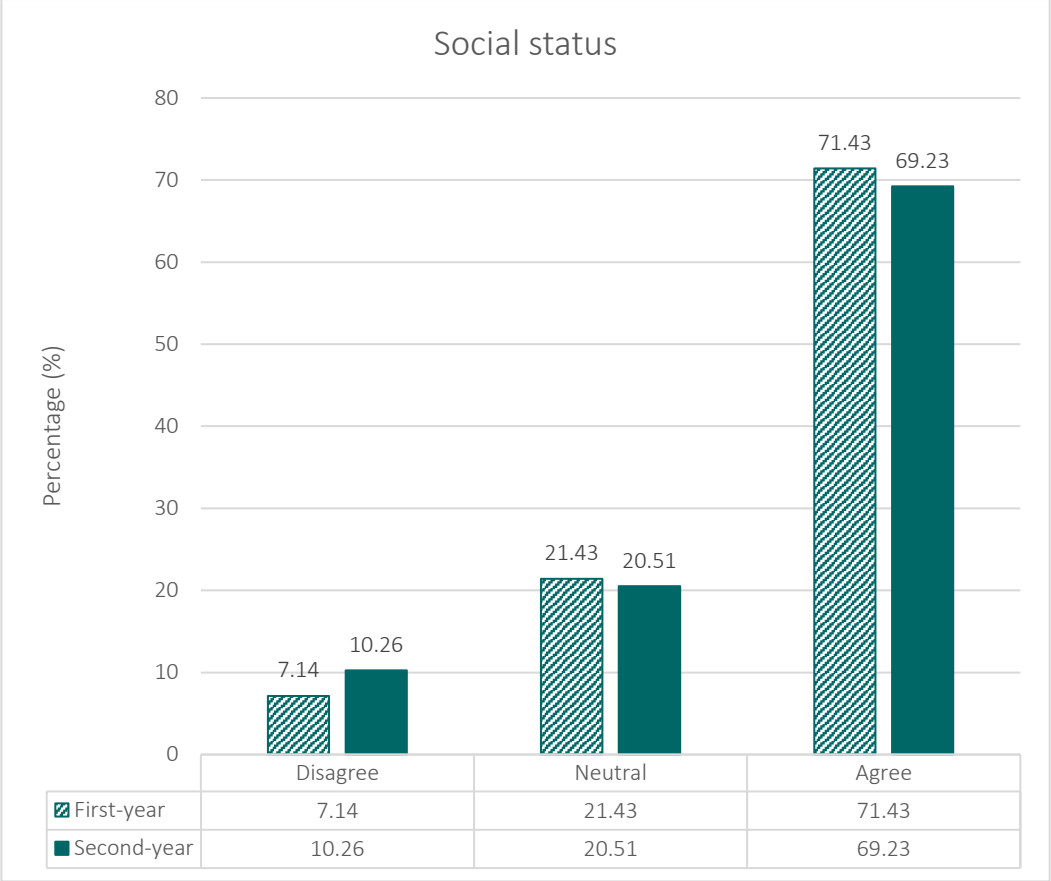



*Figure 25*. I have a clear understanding of the 'social status' of teachers in the wider community (Item 10).

This was supported by the calculation of the Likelihood ratio which revealed a highly significant association between both first-year ($p<0.01$) and second year ($p<0.01$) pre-service teachers' understanding of the public perception of the teaching profession and their perceived understanding of the social status of teachers in the wider community. Additional associations were identified as significant for first-year participants between family ($p<0.05$), helping children succeed ($p<0.05$), providing guidance to children ($p<0.05$) and inspiring students ($p<0.05$). Significant association between social status and work related tasks such as reporting ($p<0.05$) and dealing with medical issues with students ($p<0.05$) were identified.

Second-year pre-service teachers indicated a clear relationship between their understanding of the social status of teachers and holidays ($p<0.05$) and income

($p<0.05$) as well as dealing with students with special needs (disabilities $p<0.05$, gifted and talented $p<0.05$). See Table 30.

Table 30.

*Significant associations - understanding of social status.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Family** | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.950$ p = 0.027* | no significant association |
| **Holidays** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.559$ p = 0.032* |
| **Income** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.559$ p = 0.032* |
| **Helping children to succeed** | $_{X}^2(2)=7.700$ p = 0.021* | no significant association |
| **Guidance** | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.158$ p = 0.038* | no significant association |
| **Inspiring students** | $_{LX}^2(4)=12.241$ p = 0.016* | no significant association |
| **Reporting** | $_{LX}^2(4)=12.310$ p = 0.015* | no significant association |
| **Disabilities** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.274$ p = 0.036* |
| **Gifted and talented** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=12.142$ p = 0.016* |
| **Medical** | $_{LX}^2(2)=10.382$ p = 0.034* | no significant association |

$_{X}^2$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^2$ = Likelihood ratio; $p$ value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

Nigel made comment on the disparity of status between the perception of teachers in Australia and those in Finland.

> Teaching in Finland and how well they [teachers] are thought of…it's harder to get into teaching over there than it is to medicine and that's how it should be…it is just as hard, just as stressful as being a doctor or lawyer. I think in some cases it's more but…it's just not very well thought of here.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

### 4.5.2 Family-enabling/supporting needs (Items 11-16)

Items 11 to 16 of the initial questionnaire elicited participants' responses to family-enabling/supporting needs. Pre-service teachers were invited to respond regarding having children of their own, either currently or in the future (Item 11). Those who did not intend to have children progressed directly to Item 15 of the questionnaire. These items were used to stimulate thoughts regarding the importance of family friendly hours (Item 12), taking children to work (Item 13) and assisting their own children with their education (Item 14).

#### 4.5.2.1 Do you have or intend to have children? (Item 11).

The majority of first (90.48 %) and second-year (89.74 %) participants had children or intended to have children in the future (Item 11). See Figure 26.

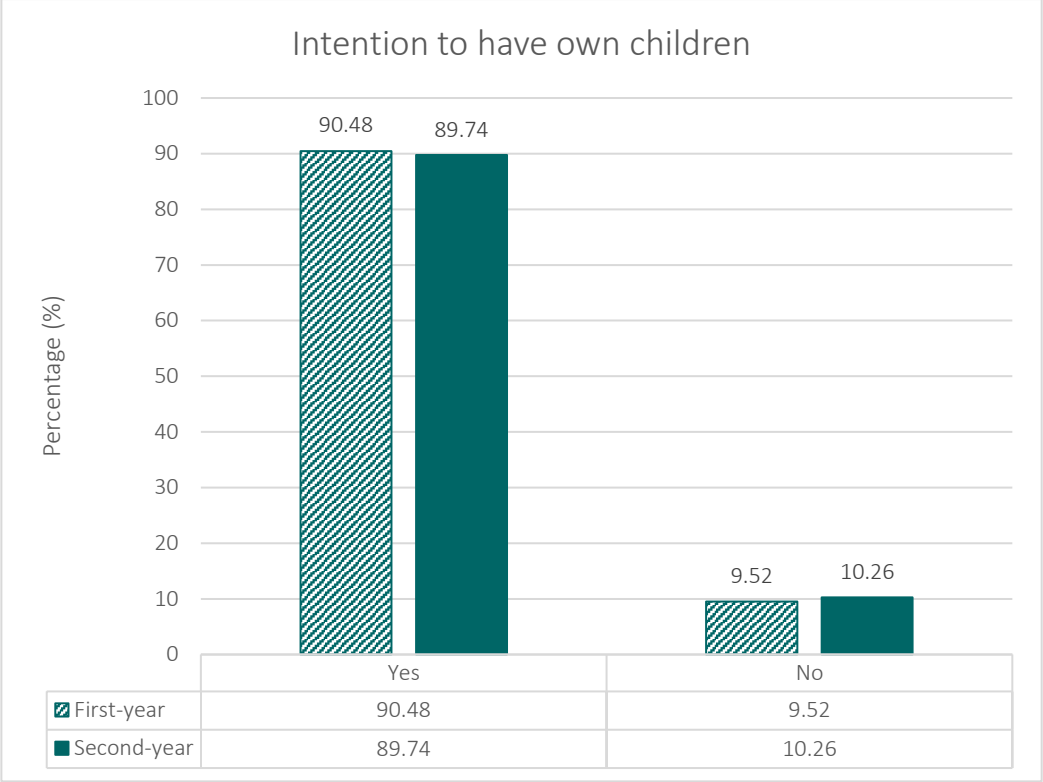



*Figure 26*. Do you have or intend to have children? (Item 11).

#### 4.5.2.2 The potential for teaching to provide work hours that are compatible with my child care needs is very important to me (Item 12).

First-year (75.00 %) and second-year (72.73 %) pre-service teachers cited family friendly work hours (Item 12) as of high importance. See Figure 27.

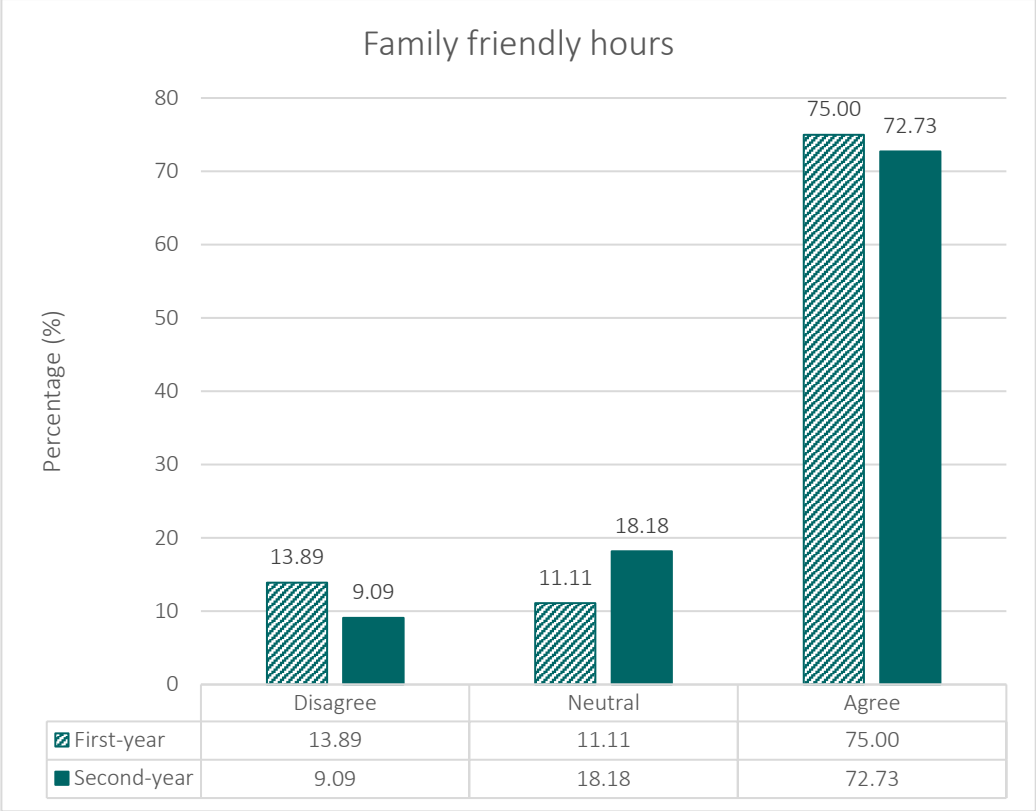



*Figure 27*. The potential for teaching to provide work hours that are compatible with my child care needs is very important to me (Item 12).

Emma and Michelle noted that teaching seemed a career choice that could better accommodate the priorities of family and personal pursuits.

> Something that fits with my family life and I think teaching will do that a lot better than my current career.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

> Because the school days are nicely structured, I will also be able to structure some time outside for me to paint.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie, who previously worked in the corporate sector noted the demands of long hours and that teaching would restore more balance in her life.

> I know you don't finish at ten past three even though school finishes at ten past three…In my other job…

> some days, I would be doing eight till eight…I think the lifestyle of a teacher is much better.'
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie also noted that teaching could provide some flexibility.

> Even if you left work at four o'clock and you still had more work to do, you can still be at home with the family and…you get to spend more time at home. For me personally, that makes a real difference
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

For the responses of the first-year pre-service teachers, the calculation of the Likelihood ratio and Chi-square statistic revealed a number of significant associations between the importance of family friendly hours and: taking one's own children to work ($p<0.01$), assisting own children in their education ($p<0.05$), helping children succeed ($p<0.05$), sharing knowledge ($p<0.05$) and being a positive role model ($p<0.05$). Work related tasks such as IEP's ($p<0.05$) and working with students with disabilities ($p<0.05$) were also significantly associated with the importance of family friendly hours.

Second-year participants indicated only a single, highly significant association between family friendly hours and assisting one's own children in their educational pursuits ($p<0.01$). See Table 31.

Table 31.

*Significant associations - importance of family-friendly work hours.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Taking child to work** | $_{LX}^2(4)=15.046$ p = 0.005** | no significant association |
| **Assisting own Children** | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.746$ p = 0.030* | $_{LX}^2(4)=13.838$ p = 0.008** |
| **Working with children** | $_{LX}^2(4)=11.149$ p = 0.025* | no significant association |
| **Helping children succeed** | $_{X}^2(2)=6.459$ p = 0.040* | no significant association |
| **Sharing knowledge** | $_{X}^2(2)=6.377$ p = 0.041* | no significant association |
| **Being a positive role model** | $_{X}^2(2)=6.377$ p = 0.041* | no significant association |
| **IEP's** | $_{LX}^2(4)=11.864$ p = 0.018* | no significant association |
| **Disabilities** | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.316$ p = 0.035* | no significant association |

$_{X}^2$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^2$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

#### 4.5.2.3 It is very important to me that teaching will allow me to 'take my children to work' when they reach school age (Item 13).

Of the participants with children or intending to have children, half of the first-year pre-service teachers (50.00 %) considered that being able to take their children to work with them (Item 13) to be important. Approximately a third of the participants indicated that they did not consider this as important (first-year 36.36 %, second-year 33.33 %) with more participants indicating a neutral response (first-year 16.67 %, second-year 33.33 %). See Figure 28.

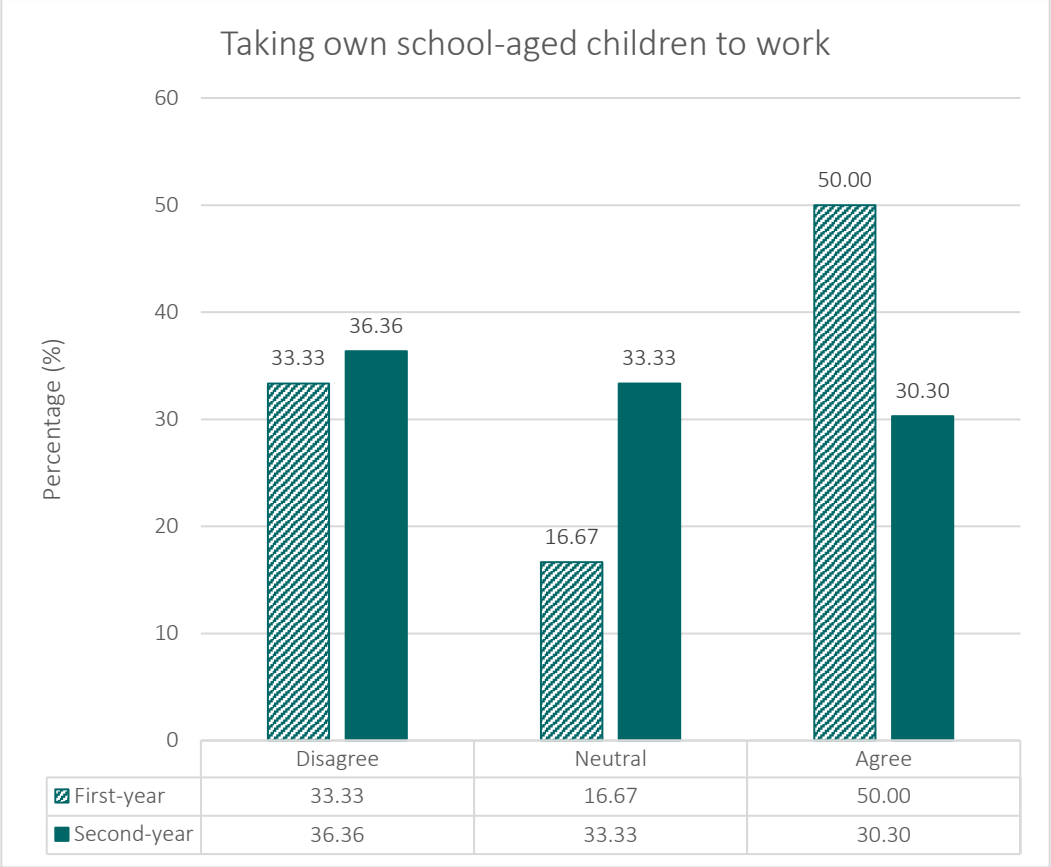



*Figure 28*. It is very important to me that teaching will allow me to 'take my children to work' when they reach school age (Item 13).

Statistical analysis drew attention to the significant association between taking one's own children to work and assisting them in their educational pursuits, indicated by both first ($p<0.05$) and second-year participants ($p<0.01$). See Table 32.

Table 32.
*Significant associations - importance of taking own children to work.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Assisting own Children** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.615$<br>p = 0.031* | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=16.089$<br>p = 0.003** |

$_{X}^{2}$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^{2}$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

Being able to work in the same school that their child attends, presents a number of logistical benefits for working parents that would otherwise be challenging.

Sophie and Sue observed and experienced such challenges in their previous workplaces.

> I do see a lot of people…struggling with child care and problems like that can be just horrendous…and expensive, so I guess that's part of my motivation [to choose to teach].
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

> Being a single parent...I've always believed that I'm his mother and I should bring him up and I don't really like palming him off to different people and sending him to afterschool care…
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Emma, with two children at school already, made mention during interview of benefit of working within a school where her children attend and being able to observe their schooling experience (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year).

#### 4.5.2.4 The potential for teaching to provide me with a thorough understanding of the education system so that I may assist my own children to succeed academically, is very important to me (Item 14).

Assisting their own children to succeed (Item 14) was considered very important by most pre-service teachers (first-year 75.00 %, second-year 72.73%). See Figure 29.

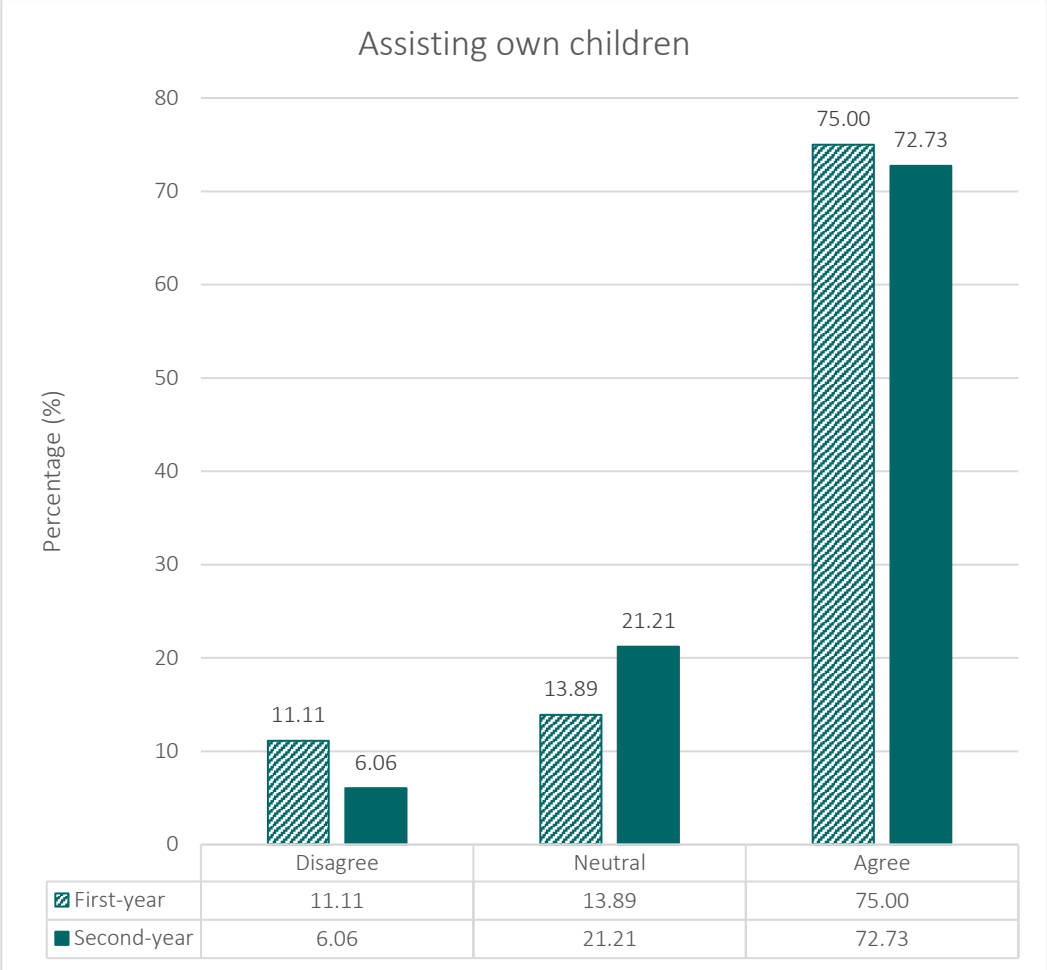



*Figure 29*. The potential for teaching to provide me with a thorough understanding of the education system so that I may assist my own children to succeed academically, is very important to me (Item 14).

The first-year cohort indicated a significant association between the importance they placed upon assisting their own children and that of providing a substantial income ($p<0.05$). This group also indicated associations between the importance of assisting own children and the level of challenge presented by assessment ($p<0.05$) and reporting ($p<0.05$), neither of which were associations made by the second-year cohort. The second-year participants emphasised dealing with medical emergencies as a significant association ($p<0.05$). See Table 33.

Table 33.

*Significant associations - importance of assisting own children.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Income** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.005$ p = 0.040* | no significant association |
| **Assessment** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=11.775$ p = 0.019* | no significant association |
| **Reporting** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.527$ p = 0.032* | no significant association |
| **Medical** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=13.040$ p = 0.011* |

$_{X}^{2}$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^{2}$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

Emma noted that the profession enabled her to work with and teach children but also to be part of her own children's education.

> Teaching… it just feels right as I said, seeing my own children learning and being able to teach other children.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Through studying to be a teacher, Emma and Sue recognised the importance of assisting their own children through exhibiting a strong work ethic and commitment to lifelong learning.

> I'm determined to get myself where I want to be…more so for my children, but also for my own self…I did it because I wanted to do it and…if you want to do something you can do it.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sue described the modelling she provided through her own education to her young son.

> He's nine and he sees me sitting at the computer and studying all the time…I suppose I'm helping [him] in a way, see…the expectations [I have] for him at school…being studious and taking pride in what he does.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

#### 4.5.2.5 Having approximately 12 weeks paid holidays per year is very important to me (Item 15).

Pre-service teachers indicated that the approximately twelve weeks of school holidays per annum teachers received were of high importance (Item 15). Some second-year pre-service teachers indicated that the holidays were not of importance (12.82 %) or were neutral in their response (35.90 %). This was higher than first-year pre-service teachers who placed a greater emphasis on the importance of holidays (66.67 %). See Figure 30.

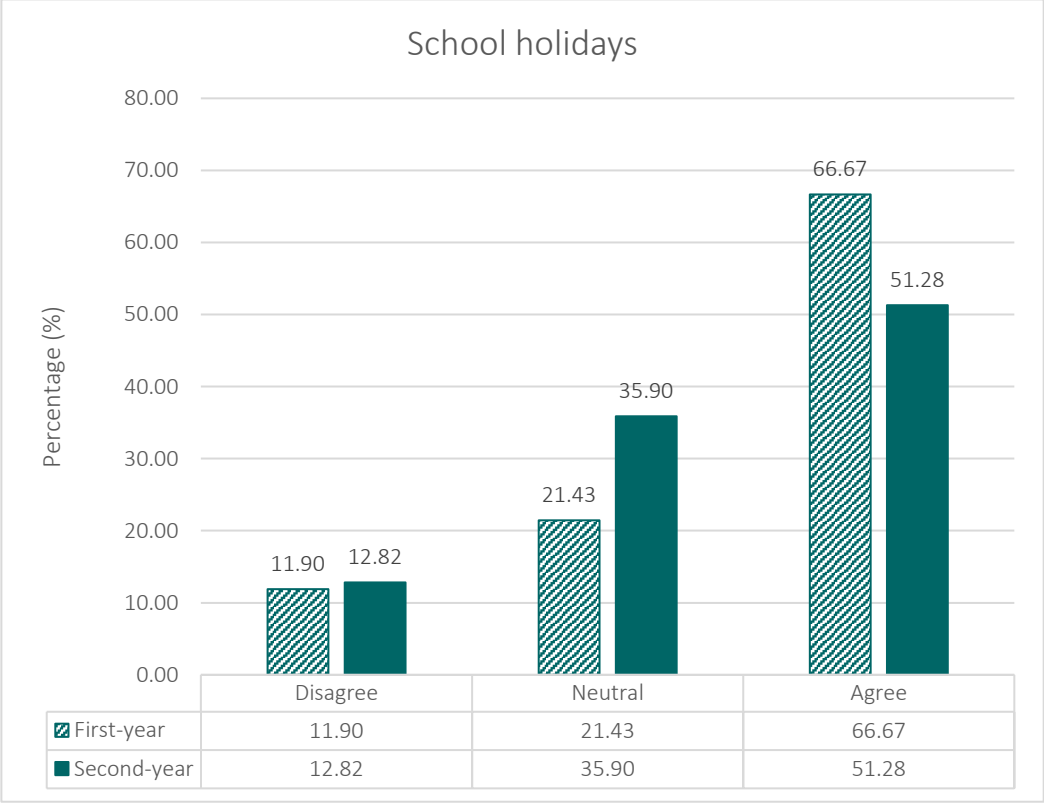



*Figure 30*. Having approximately 12 weeks paid holidays per year is very important to me (Item 15).

All participants indicated significant associations between the importance of holidays and that of a substantial income (first-year $p<0.05$, second-year $p<0.01$). Previously presented data related to pay rates revealed participants' perceptions that although pay rates for the teaching profession are relatively poor given the high level of responsibility required within the role, family friendly work hours and extensive school holidays go some way to compensate for the demanding nature of the work. First-year participants recorded associations between the importance of holidays, the demands of working with students with ADHD ($p<0.05$) and school-based violence ($p<0.05$). Second-year participants demonstrated a relationship between holidays and providing guidance to students as well as assessment ($p<0.05$). See Table 34.

Table 34.

*Significant associations - importance of school holidays.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Income** | $_{LX}^2(4)=11.139$ p = 0.025* | $_{X}^2(4)=78.00$ p = 0.000** |
| **Guidance** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=9.663$ p = 0.047* |
| **Assessment** | no significant association | $_{LX}^2(4)=11.880$ p = 0.018* |
| **ADHD** | $_{LX}^2(4)=10.315$ p = 0.035* | no significant association |
| **Violence** | $_{LX}^2(4)=9.978$ p = 0.041* | no significant association |

$_{X}^2$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^2$ = Likelihood ratio; $p$ value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

Pre-service teachers acknowledged school holidays as recovery time from the intensity of the teaching term.

Simon acknowledged the perceived extensive holidays as an attractive work condition.

> The holidays looked pretty attractive and they still are. I mean you can't deny that fact.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Joanne and Kim, acknowledged the benefits of having school holidays aligned with that of their own children.

> I want to be able to give my kids…lots of opportunities and be able to take them away and do different things with them so that's something that appeals to me as a teacher.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

> Because I have children, teaching is a great job in terms of the hours and the holidays… coincide with the kids.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

Much comment was made by pre-service teachers regarding school holidays and how these 'extensive' holiday periods are perceived by the public. The results and discussion related to Item 9 – Understanding of public perception of the profession, reflected how holidays are negatively perceived outside of the profession. Judy and Sarah commented that holidays, despite public perception, are more likely to be student-free work days or well-earned recovery time.

> [There is] the idea also the teachers don't do any work and they have a lot of holidays, it's a bludge…they're back at school two weeks…before the end of the summer break and public holidays are catch up days and a lot of nights they'll be at school and just seeing parents and of course there are phone calls and letters.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

> I've…listened to what other people say and yes teachers get really great holidays and you know fairly good work hours but they slog their guts out all year

> because they have different classes…huge workload, huge responsibility because these kids are relying on you to give them the grades they need so they can keep moving forward in their education.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

#### 4.5.2.6 Teaching will provide me with a substantial income and good work conditions (Item 16).

Similar results between first and second year cohorts were obtained for agreement regarding income and work conditions (Item 16) (first-year 66.67 %, second-year 69.23 %), neutral (first-year 26.19 %, second-year 20.51 %) and disagreement (first-year 7.14 %, second-year 10.26 %) of the importance of teaching providing a substantial income. See Figure 31.

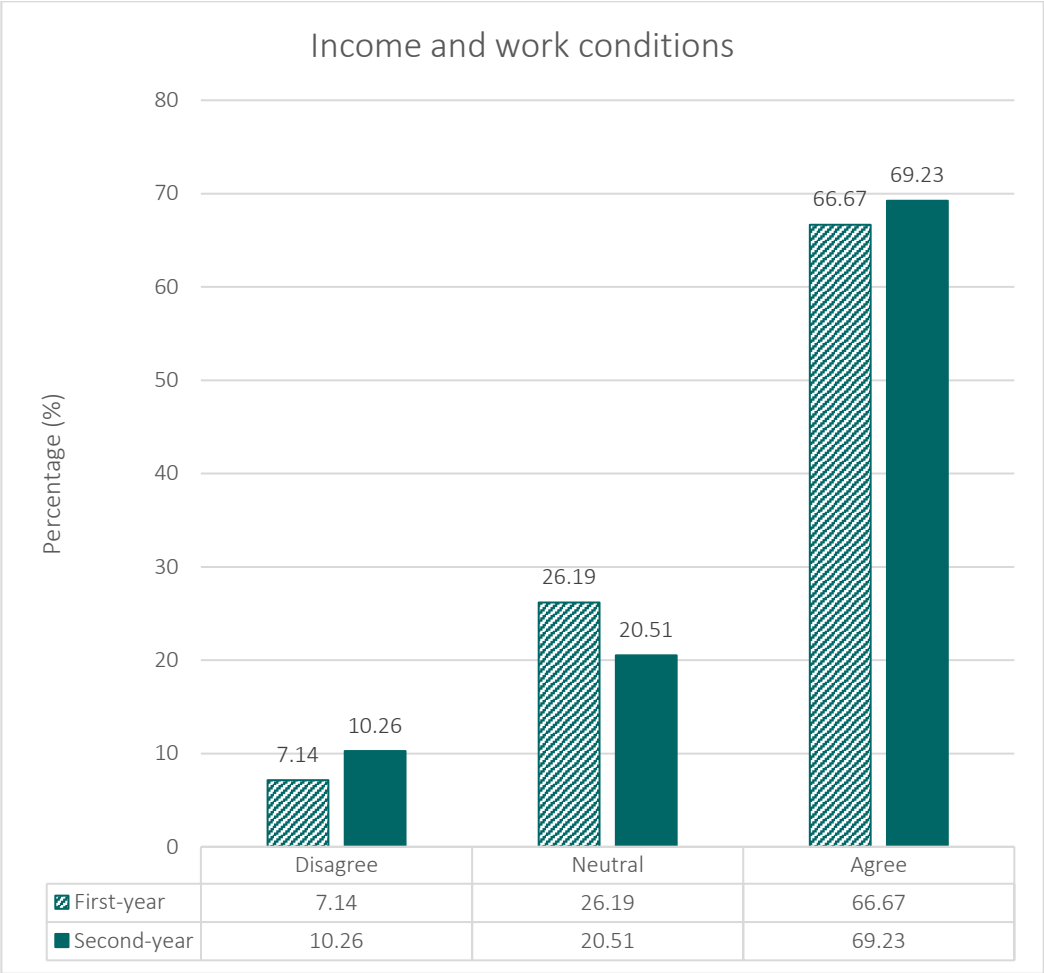



*Figure 31.* Teaching will provide me with a substantial income and good work conditions (Item 16).

Both first-year and second-year pre-service teachers continued the pattern of emphasising different factors and indicated significant associations between the importance of teaching providing a substantial income, and those key elements considered to be intrinsically rewarding such as guiding (second-year $p<0.05$) and inspiring students (first-year $p<0.05$). Factors considered to be challenging: curriculum interpretation (first-year $p<0.05$), assessment (second-year $p<0.05$) and reporting (first-year $p<0.05$) were also identified as significant. See Table 35. Significant associations regarding the importance of providing a substantial income.

Table 35.

*Significant associations - importance of providing a substantial income.*

| | First Year | Second year |
|---|---|---|
| **Guidance** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=9.663$<br>p = 0.047* |
| **Inspiring students** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.966$<br>p = 0.027* | no significant association |
| **Curriculum** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=10.781$<br>p = 0.029* | no significant association |
| **Assessment** | no significant association | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=11.880$<br>p = 0.018* |
| **Reporting** | $_{LX}^{2}(4)=11.253$<br>p = 0.024* | no significant association |

$_{X}^{2}$= Chi square statistic, $_{LX}^{2}$ = Likelihood ratio; $p$ value ($p<0.05$*, $p<0.01$**)

Although the majority of participants acknowledged the importance of income and work conditions, approximately a third disagreed or responded neutrally to this question suggesting for the latter group that financial rewards were of less importance than more intrinsic factors such as working with children. Some considered the teacher salary to be more financially rewarding than their current or ideal situation, encouraging them to make the transition.

> What I want to be is a writer but that doesn't make much money and a lot of teachers are actually writing and it's something you can do together.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

For others, however, it was considered a backwards financial step.

> I'm dropping about $35,000 a year…
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

### 4.5.3 Working with children (Items 17-22)

Items 17 to 22 of the initial questionnaire considered elements related to working with children (Item 17), helping children to succeed (Item 18), sharing knowledge (Item 18), being a positive role model (Item 19), providing guidance and stability (Item 21) and inspiring students (Item 22). Participants were invited to indicate the level of importance they attached to these elements.

#### 4.5.3.1 Teaching will provide me with the opportunity to work with children (Item 17).

Working with children (Item 17) is inherent when employed as a classroom teacher. Regardless, 4.76% of first-year participant rated working with children to be of no importance, and a further 2.38% of first-years and 5.14% of second-years provided a neutral response. See Figure 32.

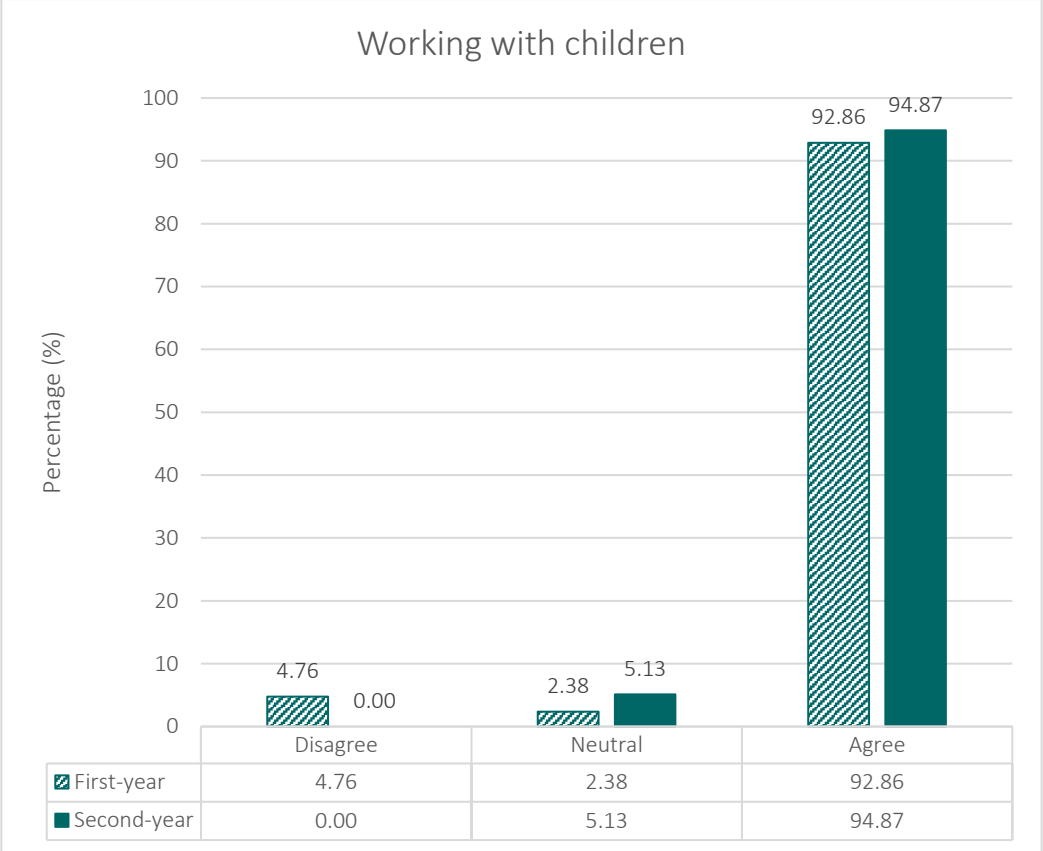



*Figure 32*. Teaching will provide me with the opportunity to work with children (Item 17).

Chi-square calculations were rendered constant as no variation between the variables could be detected for the second-year cohort. The first-year participants' responses demonstrated highly significant associations between working with children and the importance of helping children to succeed ($X^2$ (2) = 42.000, $p$<0.01); sharing knowledge ($X^2$ (2) = 20.488, $p$<0.01), and being a positive role model ($X^2$ (2) = 20.488, $p$<0.01). All second-year participants agreed that sharing knowledge with children was of high importance and as such Chi-square statistics also deemed this variable to be a constant. See Table 36.

Table 36.

*Pre-service teacher Chi-square ($X^2$) and Likelihood ($LX^2$) ratios between variables.*

| Second year / First year | Working with children | Helping children succeed | Sharing knowledge | Being a positive role model | Providing guidance and stability | Inspiring students |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Working with children** | | Constant | Constant | - | - | - |
| **Helping children succeed** | $x^2$ (2)=42.000 p = 0.000** | | Constant | - | - | - |
| **Sharing knowledge** | $x^2$ (2)=20.488 p = 0.000** | $x^2$ (1)=20.488 p = 0.000** | | - | - | - |
| **Being a positive role model** | $x^2$ (2)=20.488 p = 0.000** | $x^2$ (1)=20.488 p = 0.000** | $x^2$ (1)=42.000 p = 0.000** | | $_{LX}^2$ (4)=23.700 p = 0.000** | $_{LX}^2$ (4)=11.373 p = 0.023* |
| **Providing guidance and stability** | - | $x^2$ (2)=20.515 p = 0.000** | $x^2$ (2)=42.000 p = 0.000** | $x^2$ (2)=42.000 p = 0.000** | | - |
| **Inspiring students** | - | - | - | - | - | |

$x^2$= Chi-square statistic, $_{LX}^2$ = Likelihood ratio; *p* value (*p*<0.05*, *p*<0.01**)

#### 4.5.3.2 Teaching will allow me to be instrumental in helping children to succeed (Item 18).

Almost all pre-service teachers agreed that helping children succeed was of great importance (first-year 95.24%, second-year 100%). A small percentage (4.76%) of first-year participants were neutral in their response and no participant disagreed that this was important. See Figure 33.

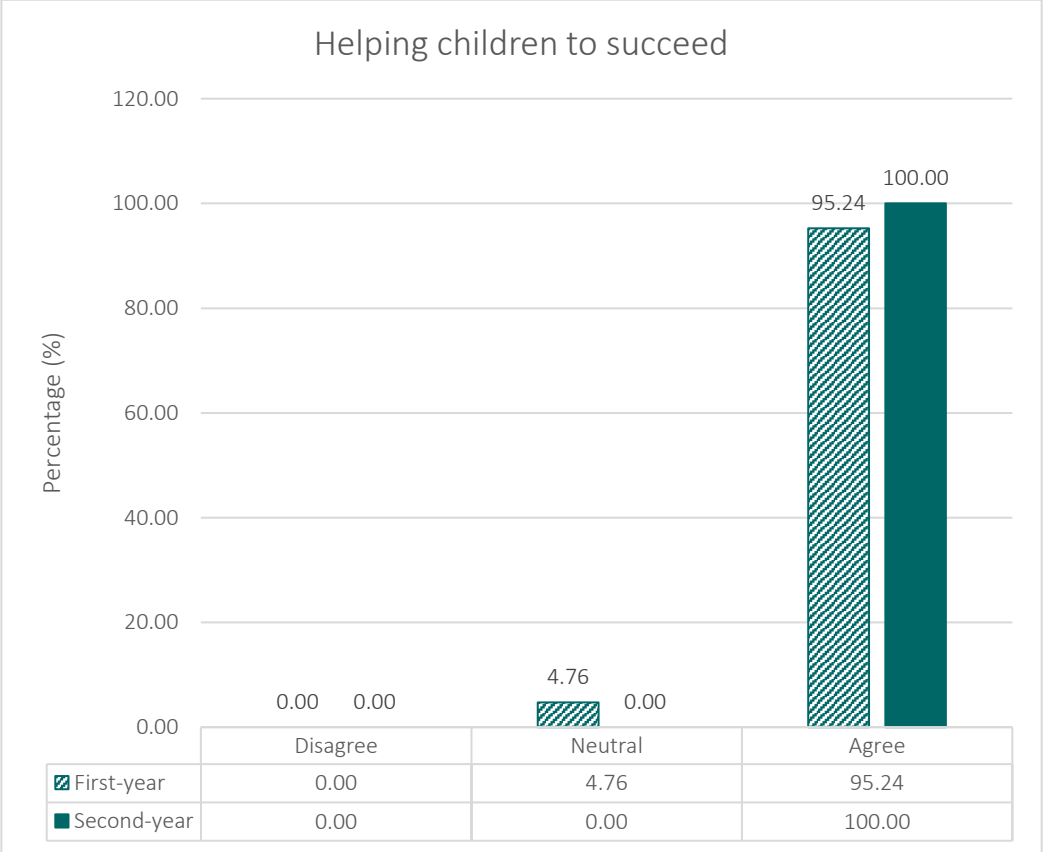



*Figure 33.* Teaching will allow me to be instrumental in helping children to succeed (Item 18).

#### 4.5.3.3 Teaching will allow me to share knowledge and encourage learning (Item 19).

Sharing knowledge (Item 19) is central to the nature of teachers work and anticipated responses were expected to reflect this fundamental element of teaching. Most participants supported this sentiment, while a small percentage (2.38 %) of first-year pre-service teachers responded neutrally to this item. See Figure 34.

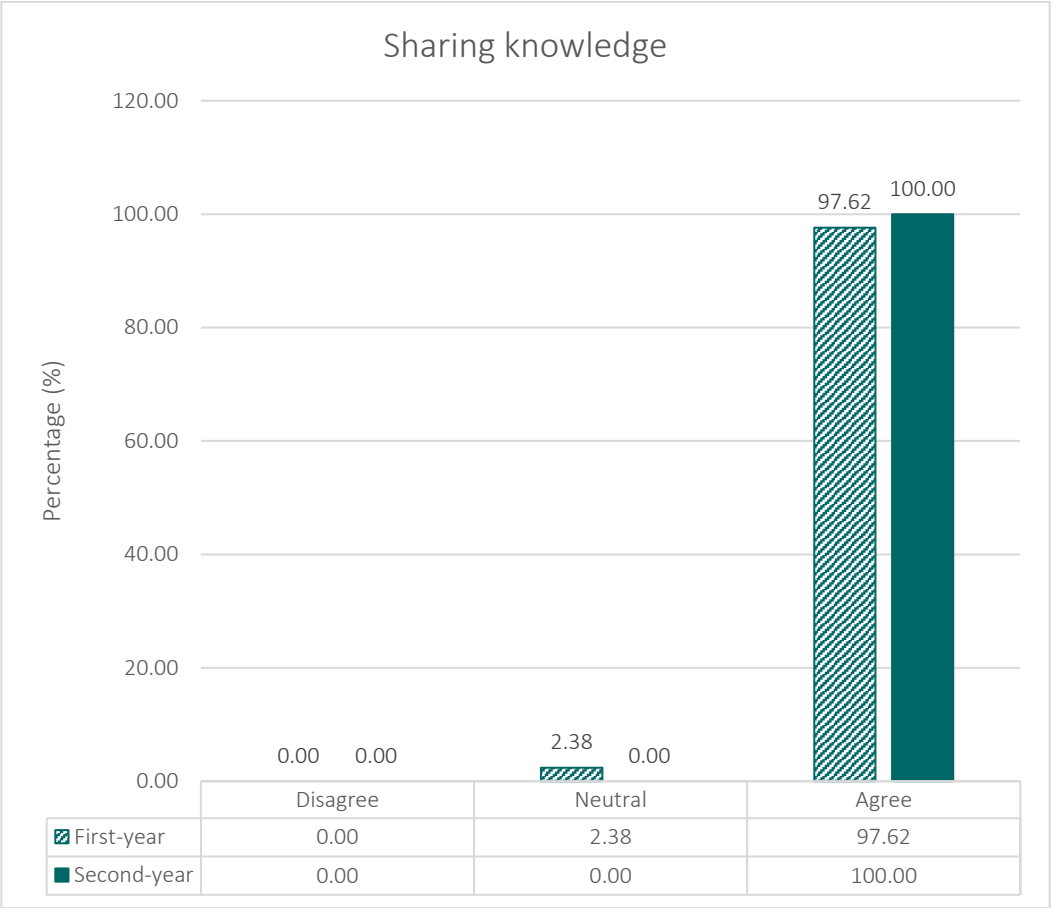



*Figure 34*. Teaching will allow me to share knowledge and encourage learning (Item 19).

Chi-square statistic calculations determined a highly significant association was evident for first-year participants between the importance of sharing knowledge and being a positive role model ($X^2$ (1) = 42.000, $p$<0.01) and providing guidance and stability for children ($X^2$ (2) = 20.515, $p$<0.01). See Table 36 above.

Emma and Sophie connected the sharing of knowledge with colleagues to be a rewarding aspects of their previous employment. These opportunities to share knowledge others affirmed their decision to teach.

> I see people having this knowledge that they didn't have in the first place that I find that very rewarding…it's probably confirmed my desire to go into teaching.
>
> (Emma, Post-PE2, First-year)

> I could see myself still teaching in thirty years…it might not be…at school, but it's still that…same process of sharing knowledge that I see myself being happy to do it all the time…forever.'
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

Jessica was explicit in her description of the kind of teacher she wishes to be and her ability to share knowledge and engage students in learning.

> I really want to be able to be the sort of teacher that has lots of knowledge…engage the kids and get them interested in the area that I'm talking about.
>
> (Jessica, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michael recalled the way in which teachers share that knowledge as being important in his education; whereas, Michelle was philosophical about how knowledge is acquired.

> He [a favourite teacher] just had a wealth of experience and knowledge and there was the way he passed it on…very calm and nothing was too much of a bother.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE2, Second-year)

> Knowledge isn't something that's poured into you, it's something that can grow out of you and you experience it.
>
> (Michelle, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Emma, however, emphasised her concerns regarding her own knowledge base in order to share understandings with her students.

> I'm still learning about [curriculum]…Depending on the age of the kids…the older they get, the more they can pick up on, how much you actually know about what you're teaching.
>
> (Emma, Post-PE2, First-year)

A fear of being ill-prepared to share knowledge was a pattern exhibited by many of the pre-service teachers, including these two examples;

> The one area I fear I don't excel in is the knowledge. I know I have a good idea about grammar…I'm not sure how I will go about teaching it.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

> I'm pretty daunted…it's like how far do you go, how much knowledge do you need to have? That's what scares me.
>
> (Michelle, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Sarah also acknowledged the importance of sharing knowledge but her comments were not limited to subject content and alluded to modelling other skills and qualities in her role as a teacher, as she explained;

> Knowledge is infinitely important in this day and age but social skills, behaviour skills, they're crucial to being a good person, being a citizen in this kind of world.
>
> (Sarah, Post-PE2, First-year)

#### 4.5.3.4 Teaching will allow me to be a positive role model for the children that I work with (Item 20).

The overwhelming majority of pre-service teachers (first-year 97.62 %, second-year 89.74) considered being a role model (Item 20) very important, however second-year participants were more neutral (7.69%) in their response. See Figure 35.


*Figure 35*. Teaching will allow me to be a positive role model for the children that I work with (Item 20).

The change in response between first-year and second-year responses may indicate the influence of classroom and school-based Professional Experience placements. Changes in perception about the importance of role modelling to students were evident between these cohorts. Despite this, these perceptions did not impact the highly significant association between the importance of being a role model and providing guidance and stability to children (First-year $X^2$ (2) = 42.000, $p$<0.01: Second-year $LX^2$ (4) = 23.700, $p$<0.01). See Table 36 above.

Both Sarah and Michelle, presented examples of first-year pre-service teachers who acknowledged the importance of being a positive role model in the lives of children;

> Well, you have to model first and foremost to be a good citizen, you have to show respect for others, you have to show respect for the world that you live in.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year, 2007)

> I'd like to be seen as a mentor for kids and a role model…to embody things like integrity and honesty and directness…being someone that they look up to…it teaches them to aspire to be those things as well.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year, 2007)

#### 4.5.3.5 Teaching will allow me to provide stability and guidance to children that might not otherwise have this in their lives (Item 21).

The data reflected that the majority of first-year participants (92.86 %) considered providing guidance and stability to children (Item 21) to be highly important. It was evident that the second-year participants thought this slightly less so (87.18 %), and 5.13% declared that providing guidance and stability to children was not important. See Figure 36.

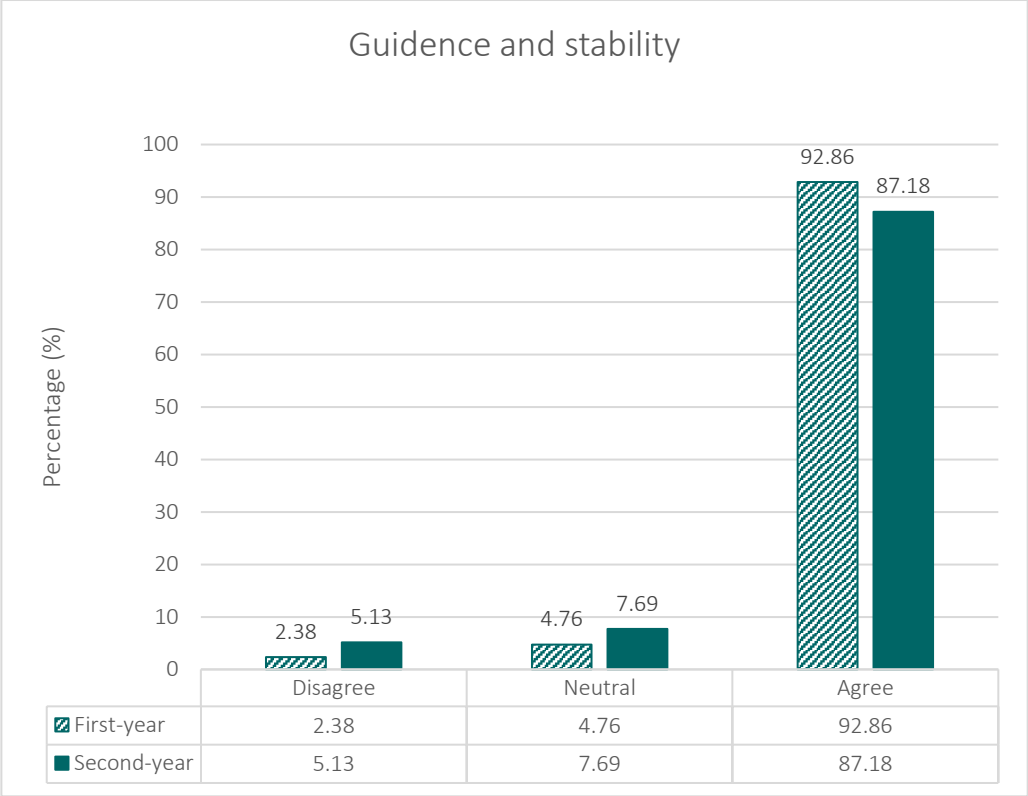



*Figure 36.* Importance of providing guidance and stability to children (Item 21).

Most pre-service teachers identified that providing guidance and stability to children was very important and expressed, through interviews, their thoughts regarding this. Sarah identified the giving and receiving of respect through interactions with her

future students as critical to building relationships and guiding them, as she explained;

> I feel if you respect someone they respect you back…
> …through modelling and just gentle guidance I can sort of help them move along that path.
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma recognised that she would find difficulty in relating to the home life of some of her students within her care and she expressed that she had not considered this element of teachers' work prior to entering the B. Teach program.

> I've never had to deal with…children from more underprivileged backgrounds…or uncaring family lives… that's going to be a big challenge for me.
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

She further defined her view of the role of the teacher and how she would enact that role;

> I think the teacher's role is to make sure [a] child is…safe… I think it's your duty of care to somehow arrange for them to have [their needs met]…I suppose [the role] provides them with a bit of support, more than they're getting at home.
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

#### 4.5.3.6 As a student I had a teacher who inspired me and I wanted to contribute to the lives of others in the same way (Item 22).

Participants reflected on their own student-teacher relationships during their own education. In particular, regarding the influence of any teacher that may have been inspiring to them and subsequently has motivated them to want to contribute to others in the same way. The majority of participants agreed they had this experience (first-year 59.12%, second-year 64.10%) and that it was a contributing factor in their own future aspirations to inspire children. See Figure 37.

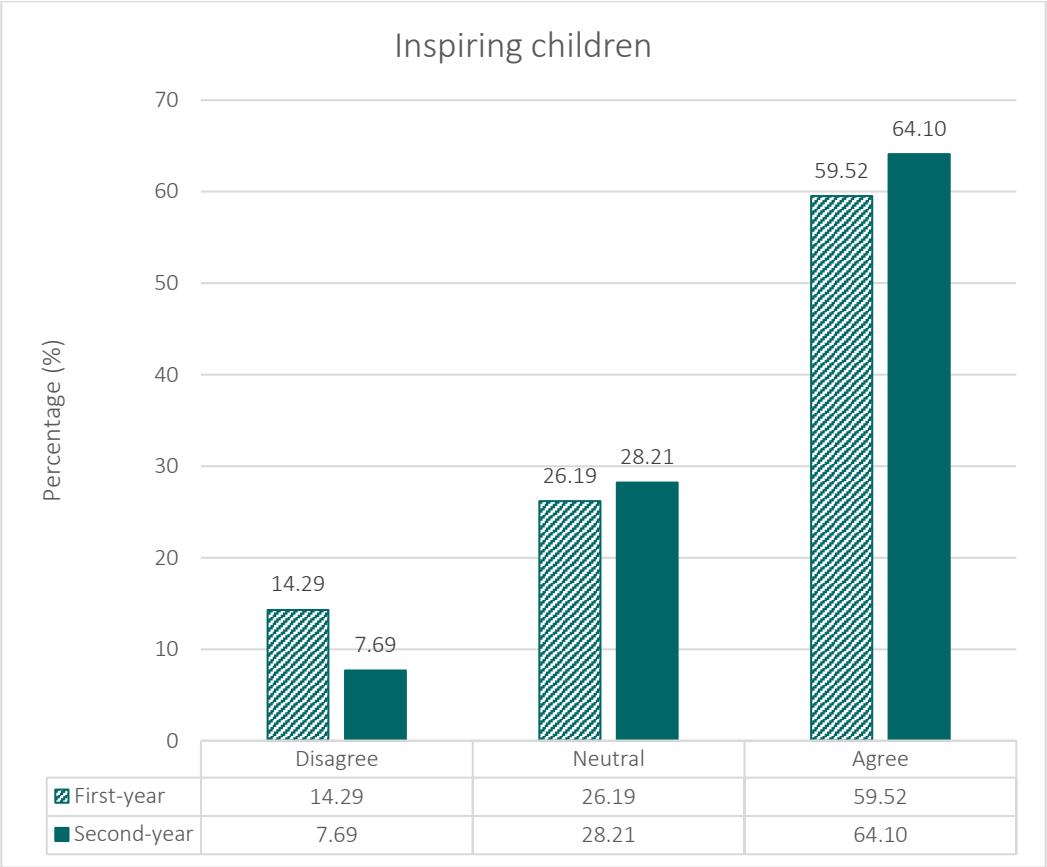



*Figure 37.* As a student I had a teacher who inspired me and I wanted to contribute to the lives of others in the same way (Item 22).

Second-year participants revealed a significant association between inspiring students and being a positive role model ($LX^2$ (4) = 11.373, $p$<0.01). See Table 36 above.

### 4.5.4 Required Competencies (Items 23-38)

Items 23 to 38 of the initial questionnaire prompted pre-service teacher responses regarding their anticipated level of challenge regarding required competencies of teachers including: programming and curriculum interpretation (Item 23), student assessment (Item 24), reporting (Item 25), inclusive practices (Item 26, 27), working with gifted and talented students (Item 28), student welfare (Item 29), dealing with medical emergencies (Item 30), managing workload (Item 31), managing class sizes (Item 32) maintaining relationships with staff (Item 33), parents (Item 34), and

students (Item 35), behaviour management (Item 36), managing ADHD/ADD in the classroom (Item 37), and violence within the school community (Item 38).

#### 4.5.4.1 Developing teaching programs and interpreting the curriculum will be very challenging for me (Item 23).

The responses from both cohorts regarding the level of challenge presented by programming and curriculum interpretation (Item 23) were similar (Disagreement: first-year 14.29%, second-year 12.82%; Neutral: first-year 33.33%, second-year 25.64%; Agreement: first-year 52.38%, second-year 61.54%). See Figure 38.

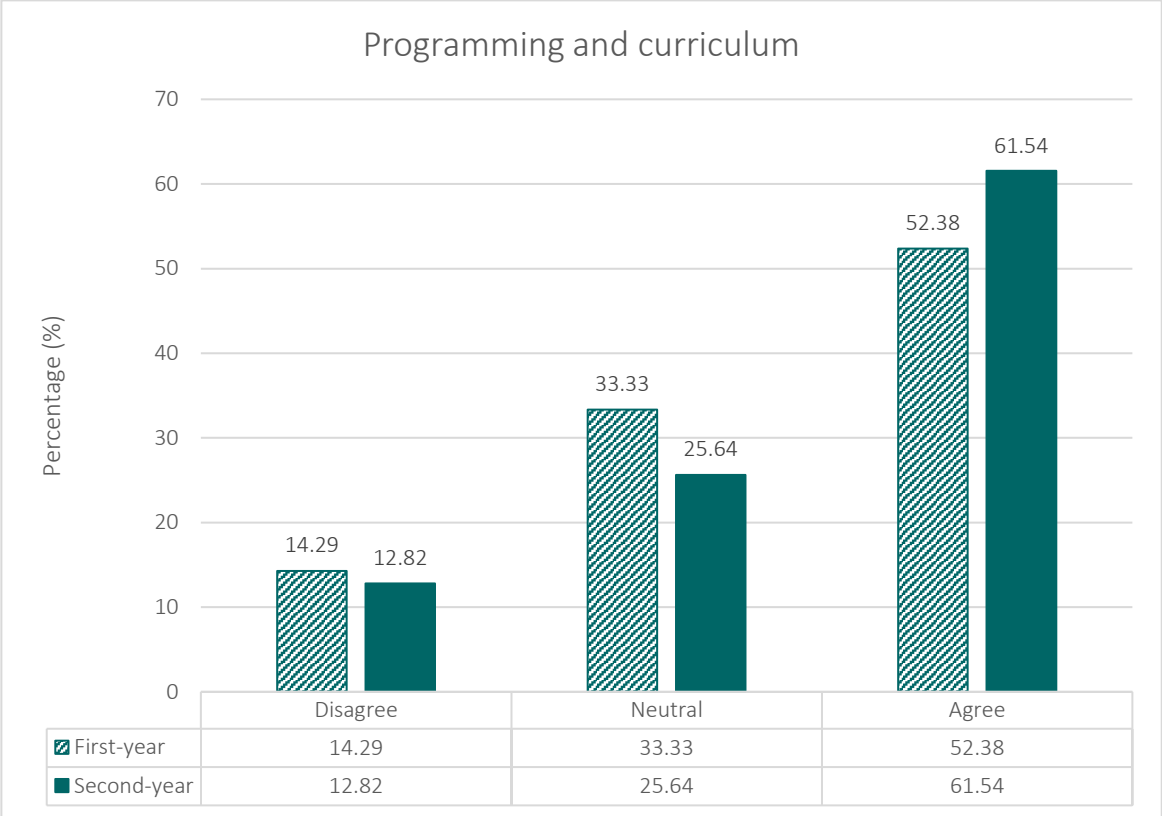



*Figure 38.* Developing teaching programs and interpreting the curriculum will be very challenging for me (Item 23).

Emma and Joanne expressed their lack of understanding regarding curriculum;

> I haven't done any of the curriculum studies. So in seven weeks… we're going into the

> classroom… that scares me a bit, that's a big challenge for me.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Although Emma was anxious regarding her preparedness for Professional Experience, Joanne was confident she would be provided with the necessary teachings and learning about the topic;

> I don't feel like I know very much about the curriculum yet. I'm assuming that will come with…both my observations and my classes.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Kim was concerned that even with the appropriate units of study, actually understanding the curriculum would present some challenges;

> The thing that I worry most about is… getting my head around curriculum and breaking that down into units and then into lessons. I think because it's still the unknown…I feel a bit phased by it.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michelle expressed a view that may have indicated more experience of curriculum as she was concerned she may find the curriculum restrictive;

> I think a challenge would be…just sticking to the curriculum [it] is going to be quite challenging.
>
> (Michelle, Post-PE2, Second-year)

William had little concern with his ability to interpret and understand the curriculum.

> I don't see curriculum being a problem. It's just the things that I don't have any actual experience with…it will be a learning curve.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Similar to Joanne, Simon was confident that the B. Teach would prepare him for the classroom, although he expressed concerns about what learning would come and how it would prepare him.

> Reporting and curriculum methods are a big change at the moment…I think we're in a limbo stage…It will come together…but it's frightening at this stage.
>
> (Simon, Post-PE2, First-year)

#### 4.5.4.2 Understanding the required process of assessing students will be very difficult for me (Item 24).

Second-year pre-service teachers' results showed greater agreement (53.85 %) that they perceived assessment of students to present a level of challenge, more so than their first-year counterparts (38.10 %). First-year participant responses were spread almost evenly across each level of challenge (not challenging 26.19%, neutral 35.71% and challenging 38.10%). See Figure 39.

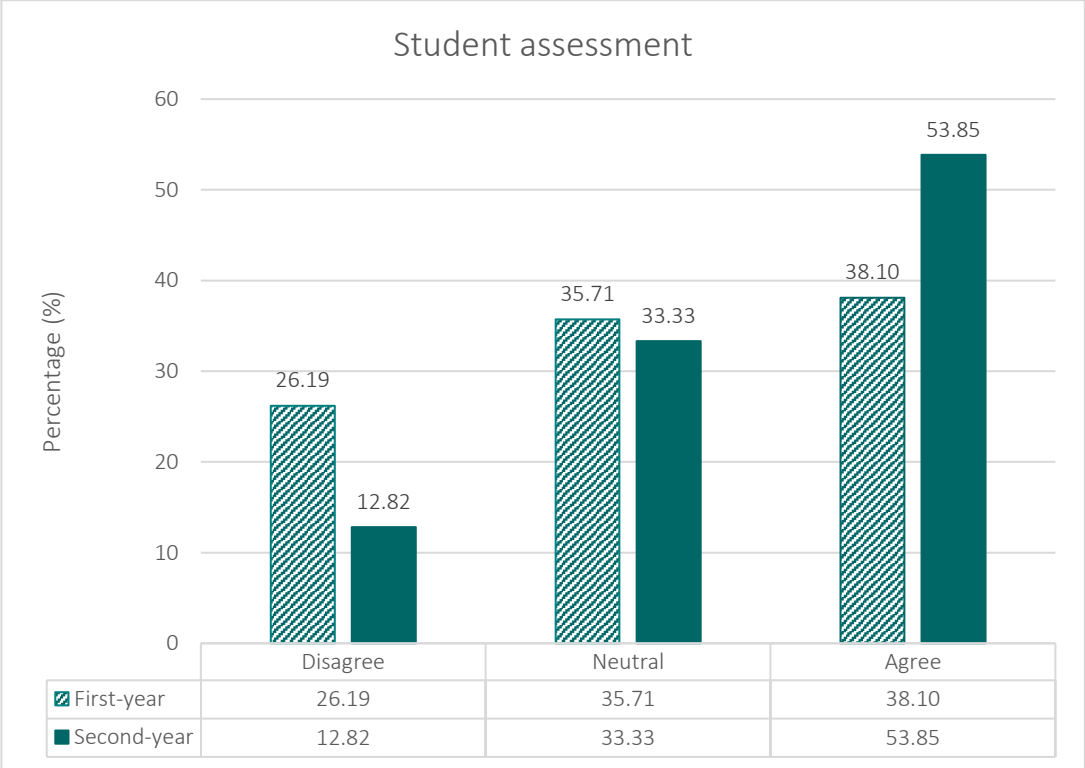



*Figure 39.* Understanding the required process of assessing students will be very difficult for me (Item 24).

Some participants, including Jessica, indicated feeling under-prepared for approaching the task of assessment and therefore perceived a higher level of challenge;

> I think because we didn't really do much assessment…so it's a bit overwhelming.
> (Jessica, Post-PE2, Second-year)

#### 4.5.4.3 Reporting to parents in writing and conducting parent-teacher interviews will be very challenging for me (Item 25).

Similar to assessment, approximately one-third of first-year pre-service teachers agreed that reporting to parents (Item 25) presented a challenge to them (38.10 %). Despite this, results across the cohorts were broadly spread across the spectrum of disagree to agree and more than half of this cohort indicated that reporting did not present them with a level of challenge.

Less than a third of second-year pre-service teachers indicated that communicating and reporting to parents may prove either challenging or not challenging (agreement 28.21 %; disagreement 30.77 %) with the majority indicating a neutral response (41.03 %). No comment by either cohort pertaining to reporting was made during qualitative data collection. See Figure 40.

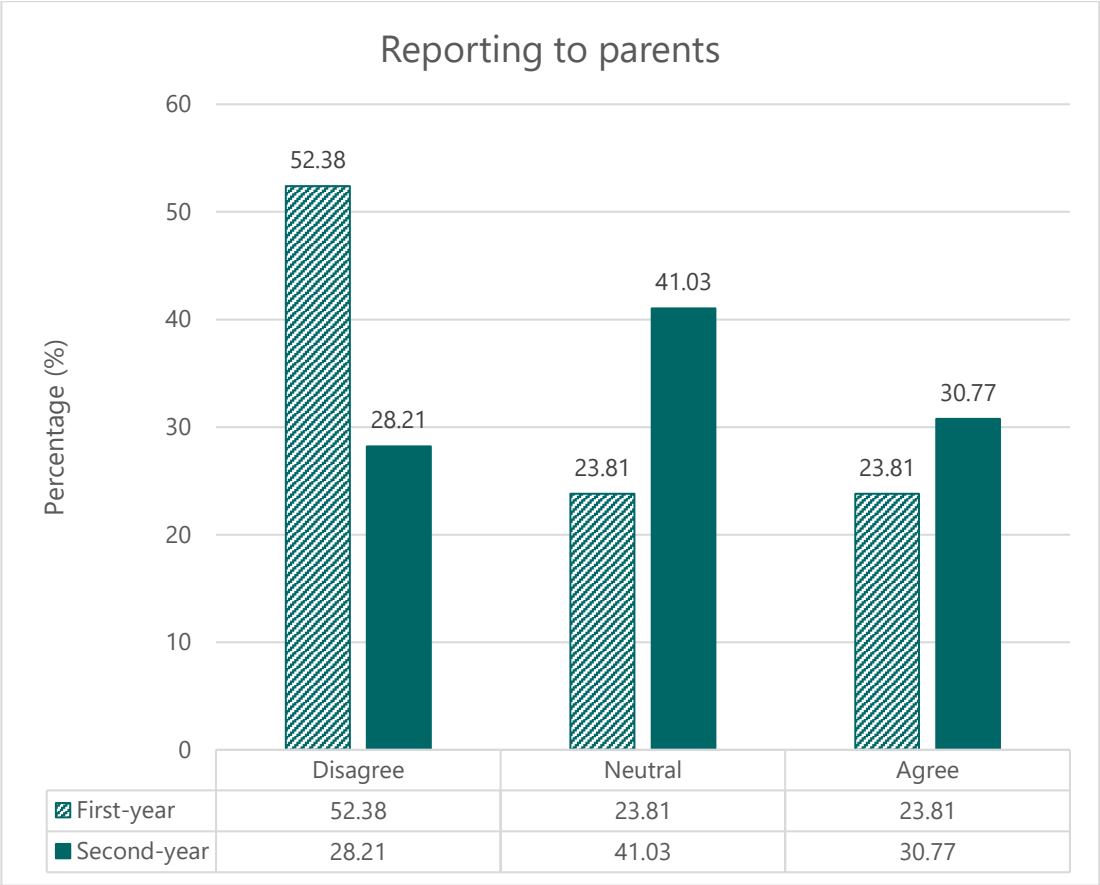



*Figure 40*. Reporting to parents in writing and conducting parent-teacher interviews will be very challenging for me (Item 25).

#### 4.5.4.4 Planning and programming for students with disabilities will be very difficult for me (Item 26).

Both first-year and second-year pre-service teachers indicated that planning for inclusion (Item 26) presented a high level of challenge (first-year 42.86%, second-year 46.15%). The first-year cohort was more decisive in its response, with only 21.43% providing a neutral response as opposed to 38.46% of second-year participants. A relatively small percentage of 15.38% of the second-year cohort indicated that planning for inclusive practices was not deemed challenging. See Figure 41.

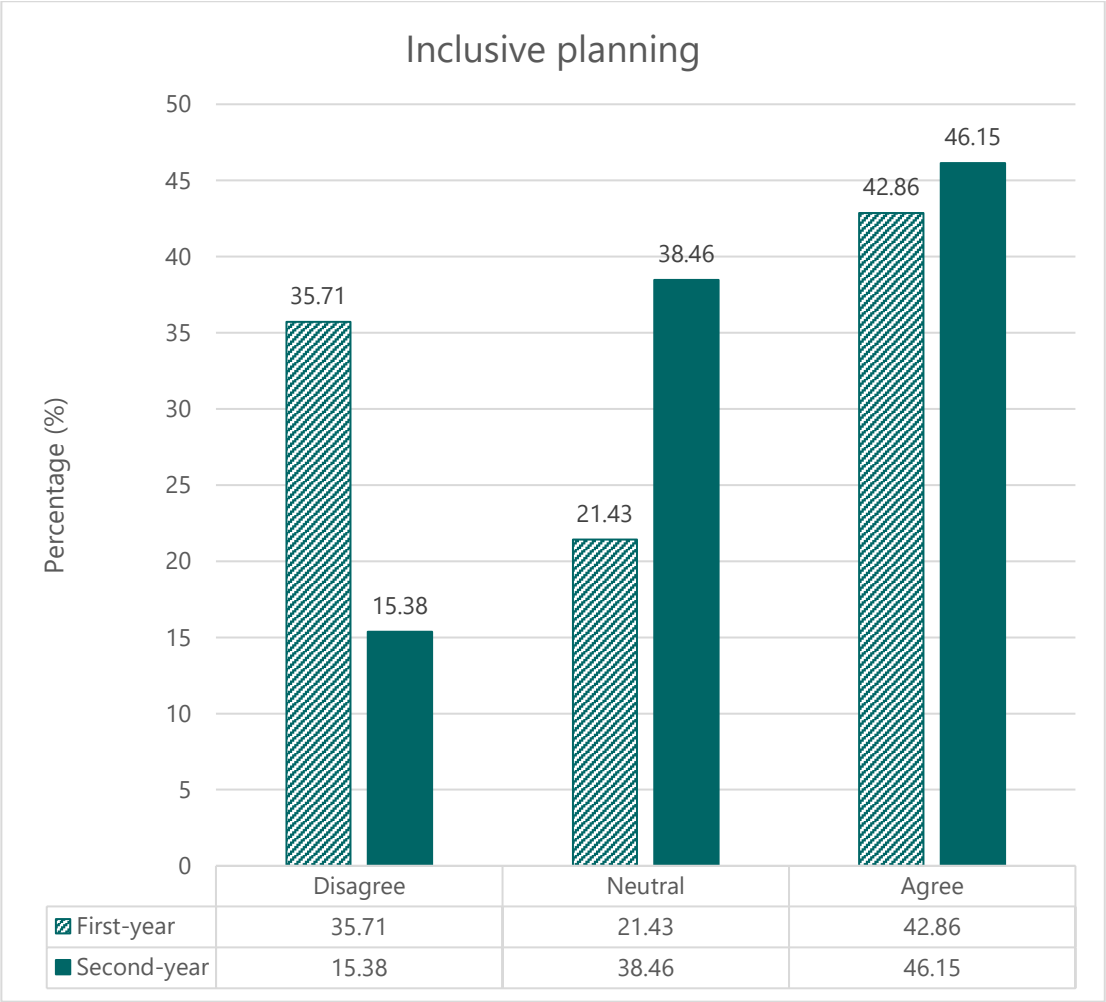



*Figure 41*. Planning and programming for students with disabilities will be very difficult for me (Item 26).

Michelle was certain that accommodating students diagnosed with specific disabilities or illnesses would be less difficult than other elements of working with others such as navigating personalities, as she explained;

> I guess that in some ways they're easy to deal [disabilities]…there's been so much research done about…[them] and how to deal with them but when it comes to personalities…everyone's got their own… so that's just a matter of getting to know them for yourself.
>
> (Michelle, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Conversely, William was sure about the level of challenge that working with students with a disability in the classroom would present for him;

Children with disabilities is going to be a…challenge.

(William, Pre-PE, First-year)

#### 4.5.4.5 Teaching students with disabilities in an inclusive classroom will be very challenging for me (Item 27).

It was anticipated that similar results would be observed for both Items 26 and 27 of the questionnaire, where both the planning for inclusion and implementation of inclusion through practice were considered. This expectation was evident with a slight shift toward the perception of inclusive practices being more challenging than planning for inclusion in both the first-year (11.9%) and second-year (5.13 %) cohorts. Over half of both cohorts agreed that inclusive practices within the classroom would present a level of challenge within their future role as teachers. See Figure 42.

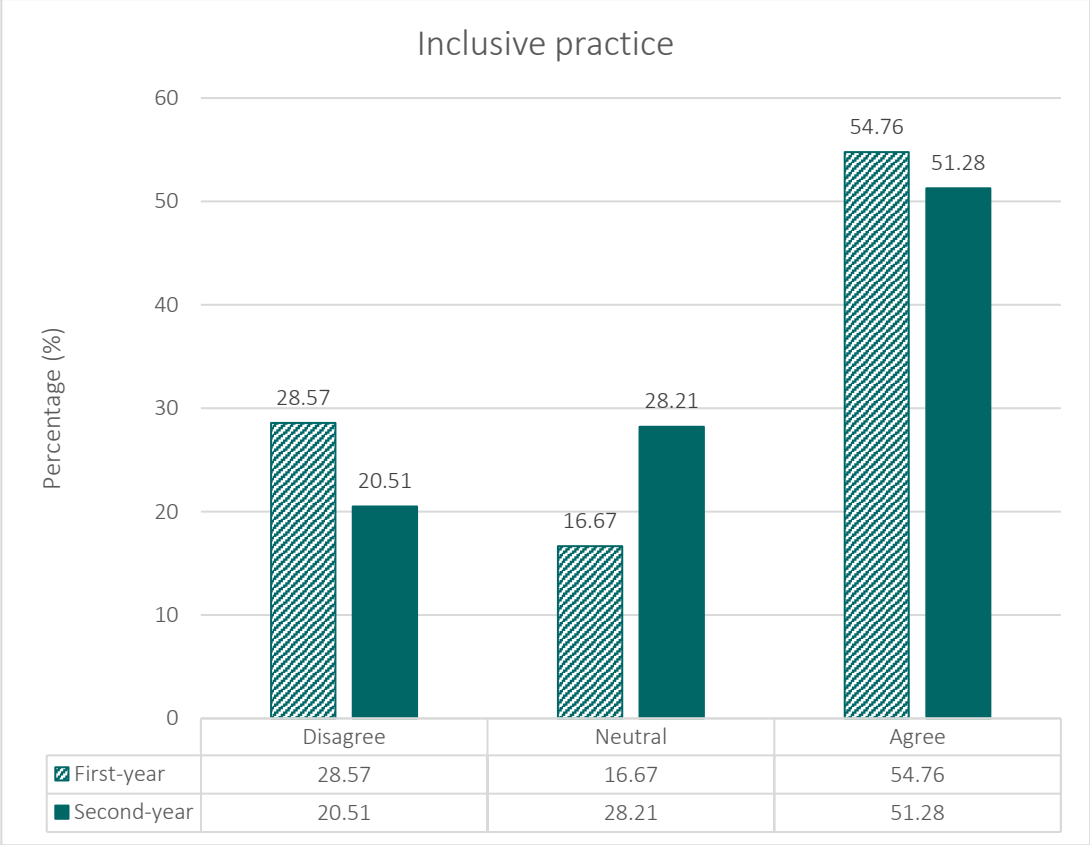



*Figure 42.* Teaching students with disabilities in an inclusive classroom will be very challenging for me (Item 27).

This perceived challenge was captured in qualitative responses including where Jessica recalled the challenge faced in both planning and implementing inclusive practices in the classroom. These perceptions were developed through the adjustments she make to her practice while completing two periods of Professional Experience, as she explained;

> You had to constantly adjust lesson plans to suit different sort[s] of kids that were in the class. I didn't realise it would be quite a range as well…I just wasn't prepared for that at all…[I] had to work really hard with their aide…to try and include them.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE2, Second-year)

#### 4.5.4.6 Planning and Programming for gifted and talented students will be very difficult for me (Item 28).

Results indicated similar proportions of participants who perceived planning for gifted and talented students to be challenging (first-year 33.33%, second-year 30.77%), not at all challenging (first-year 33.33%, second-year 38.10%), or who were unsure of the level of challenge (first-year 28.57%, second-year 35.90%). See Figure 43.

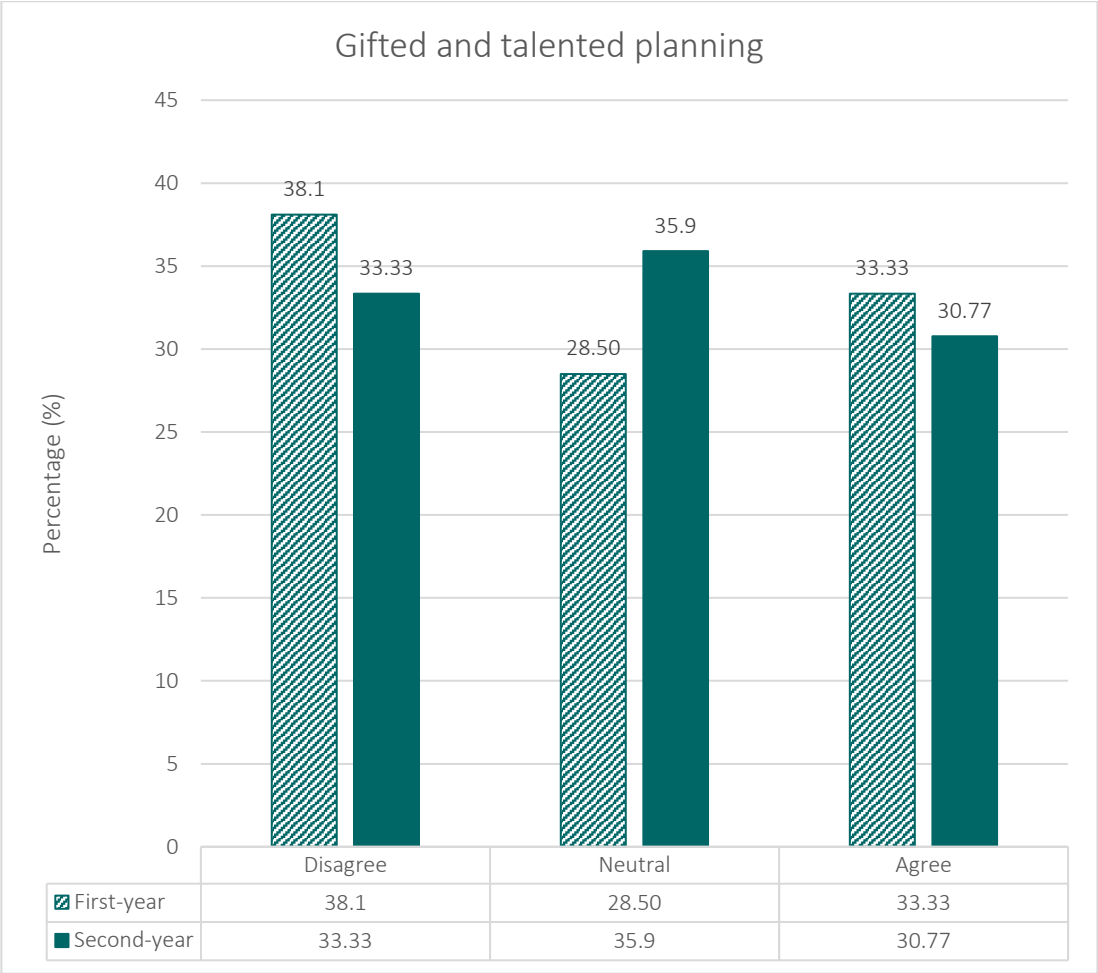



*Figure 43*. Planning and Programming for gifted and talented students will be very difficult for me (Item 28).

#### 4.5.4.7 Mandatory reporting of child welfare concerns will be very challenging for me (Item 29).

Over half of the first-year pre-service teachers perceived the act of mandatory reporting of child welfare issues to present no challenge at all (54.76%). By the second year in the program, pre-service teachers were recording responses that indicated an increased awareness of the associated challenges, with a 16.30% difference in no perceived challenge regarding mandatory reporting (38.46%) and a shift to higher levels of challenge (28.21 %) or uncertainty (33.33 %). See Figure 44.

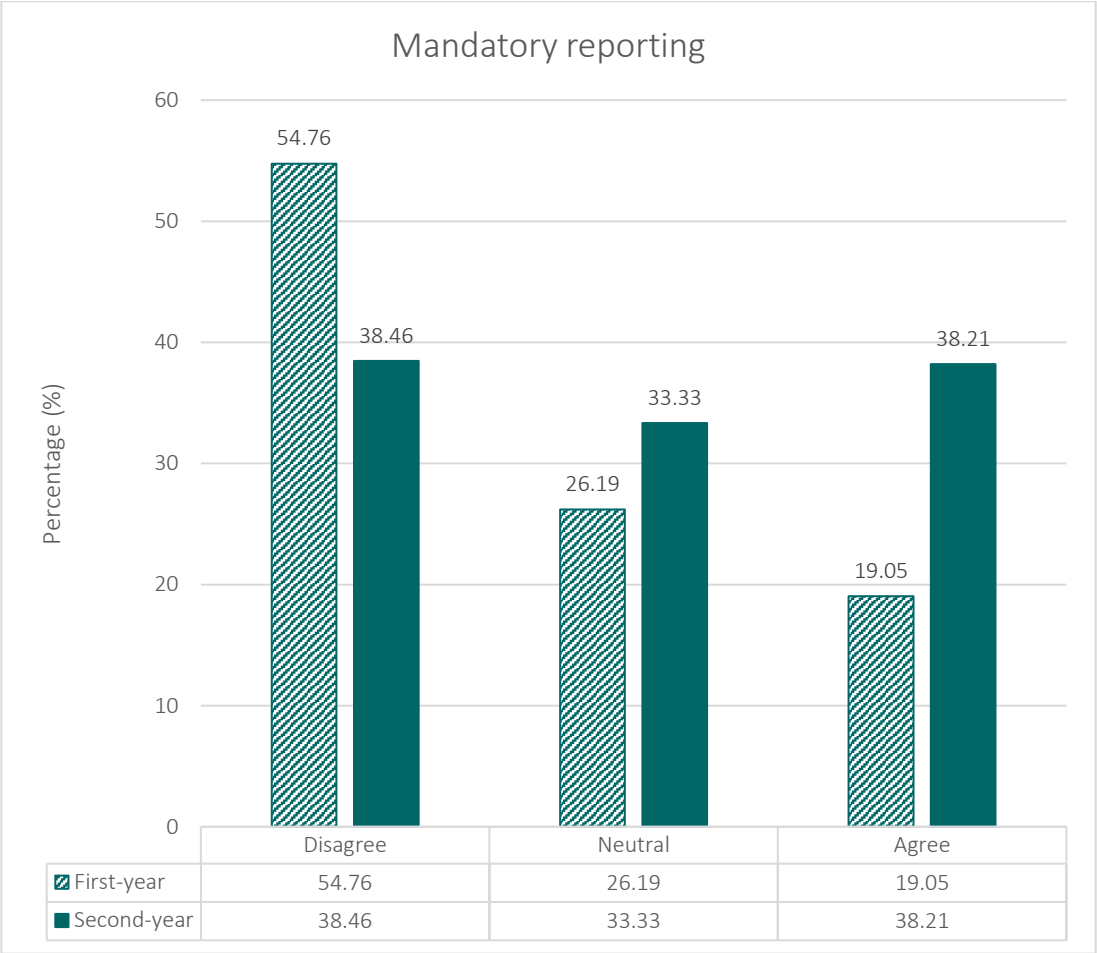



*Figure 44.* Mandatory reporting of child welfare concerns will be very challenging for me (Item 29).

#### 4.5.4.8 Dealing with potential medical emergencies such as accidents or anaphylactic attacks (severe allergic reactions) will be very difficult for me (Item 30).

Similar results were observed between both first-year and second-year pre-service teachers who expressed that tending to medical emergencies within the school context did not present a level of challenge. However, the first-year participants demonstrated a greater number of responses in agreement (30.95 %) rather than neutral (21.43 %) suggesting a slightly higher level of certainty that tending to medical emergencies would be difficult. See Figure 45.

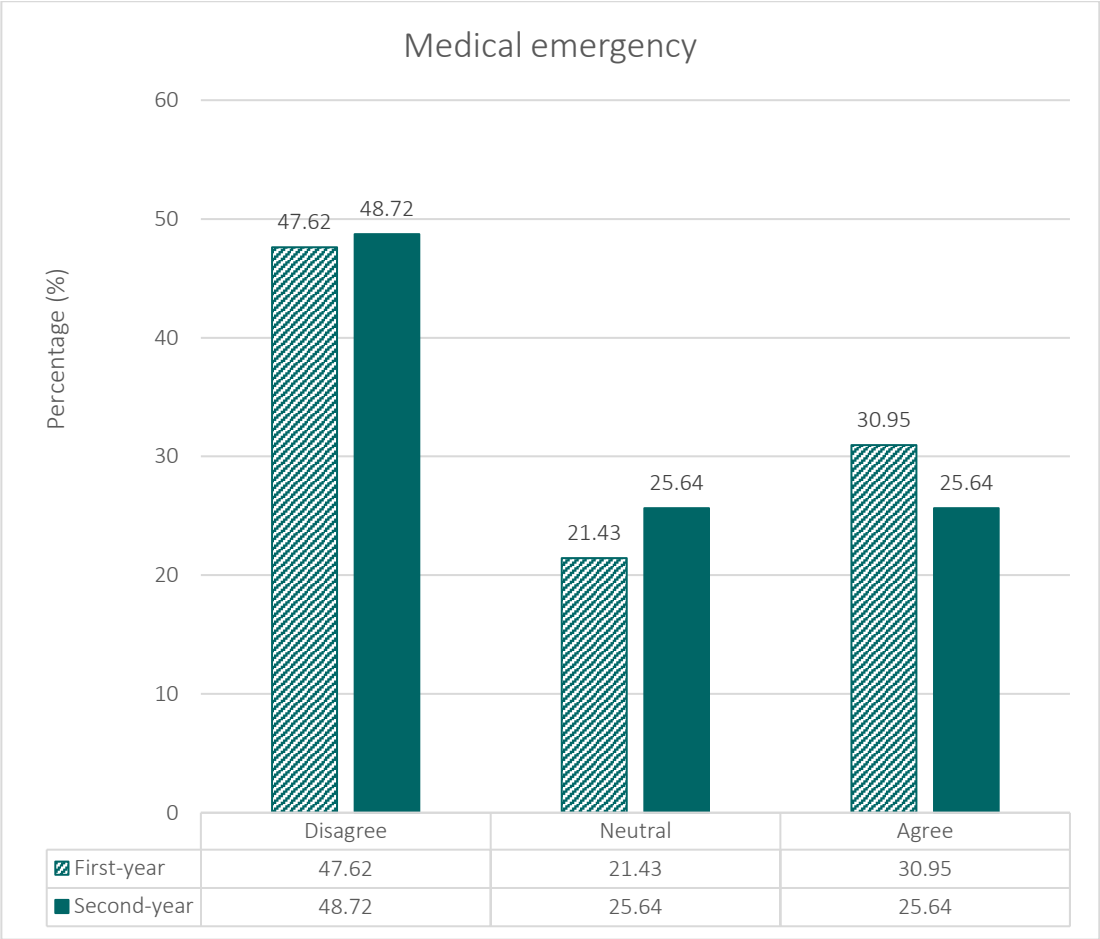



*Figure 45*. Dealing with potential medical emergencies such as accidents or anaphylactic attacks (severe allergic reactions) will be very difficult for me (Item 30).

Michael reported not being concerned with the need to tend to medical emergencies and expressed confidence that this element of school life would be dealt with by those with more specialised training, as he outlined;

> I'm not trained to help out with every student who's got… personal problems or medical problems and all that…I'm quite prepared to say…okay, I can't handle this person.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Conversely, Michelle and William expressed differing views based on their previous experience. Michelle's lack of experience was something she acknowledged as needing amending prior to teaching, as she emphasised;

> I don't know how I'd cope with it…someone having an asthma attack or…passing out. I don't have the skills or knowledge to be able to deal with those things.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

William's prior experience allowed him to feel confident in his ability to manage medical emergencies in the school setting;

> Things like medical emergencies, I'm used to that anyway, as a tour guide.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

#### 4.5.4.9 Maintaining the workload required to provide quality teaching will be very challenging for me (Item 31).

Approximately a third of the first-year cohort (30.95%) indicated that managing a high workload (Item 31) would be challenging while 40.48% indicated it would not. In contrast, 50.00% of the second year cohort responded that managing a high workload indeed would present difficulty. See Figure 46.


*Figure 46*. Maintaining the workload required to provide quality teaching will be very challenging for me (Item 31).

Joanne, having had the benefit of observing family members as practising teachers, shared her concerns about the long hours but vindicated the situation with the intrinsic reward of working with children, an area where she feels passionate;

> I worry a bit about the hours…it seems like a long day but I wouldn't want to do a job that I wasn't passionate about and teaching is the only one that I'm passionate about.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

She also expressed her frustration of those who criticise teachers in relation to their workload. In reference to those people that suggest teachers' work is easy and that they finish their workday at 3 o'clock Joanne commented;

> They know that we don't [finish work hours at 3 o'clock], I'd love to swap jobs with some of those people and say 'you do it for a day' and just see them not cope.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

#### 4.5.4.10 Increasing class sizes will be difficult to manage (Item 32).

Both first-year (71.43 %) and second-year (74.36 %) pre-service teachers indicated that increasing class sizes (Item 32) presented a high level of challenge with identical percentages for disagreement (first-year 14.29%, second-year 12.82%) and neutral responses (first-year 14.29%, second-year 12.82%) obtained. See Figure 47.

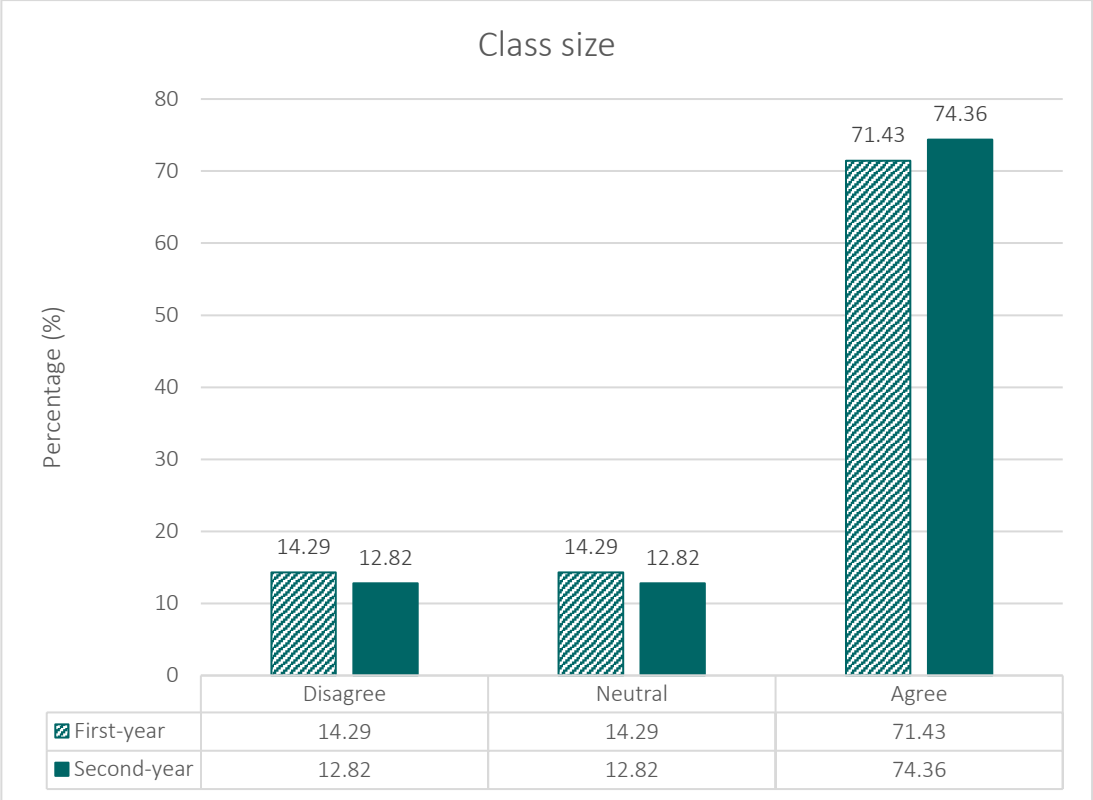



*Figure 47*. Increasing class sizes will be difficult to manage (Item 32).

#### 4.5.4.11 Items 33 - 35. Maintaining positive relationships with staff, parents and students will be very challenging for me.

Items 33 to 35 of the initial questionnaire sought the perception of pre-service teachers regarding developing and maintaining relationships with staff, parents and students. For all three items, a strong indication was identified that relationship development and maintenance presented the pre-service teachers in both cohorts with no real level of challenge. More uncertainty surrounded relationships with parents than relationships with staff and even less regarding relationships with students. See Figure 48.

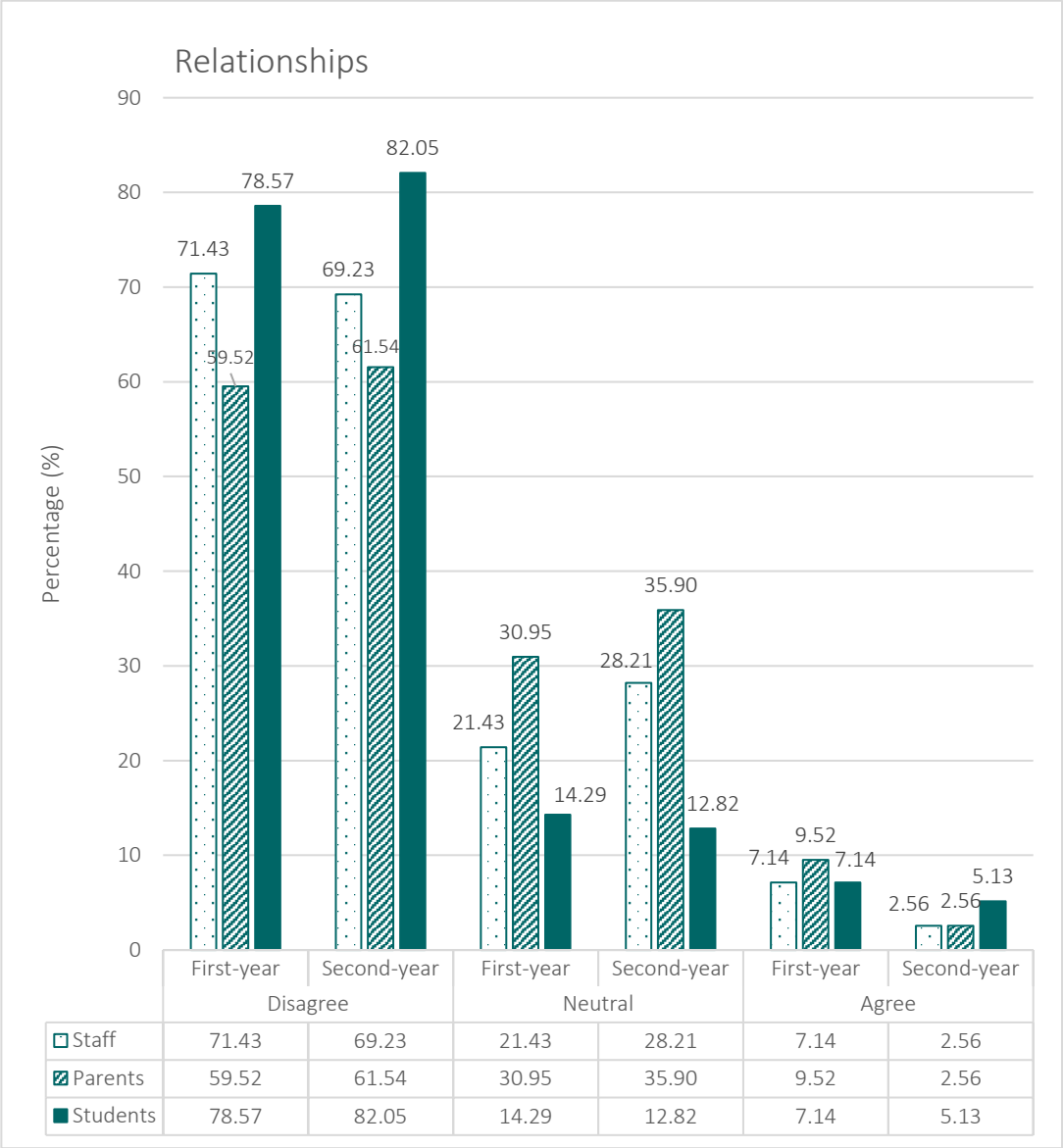



*Figure 48.* Perceived level of challenge regarding relationships with staff, parents and students (Items 33-35).

Jessica noted that in order to have effective relationships with staff members, a feeling of equality was needed, something that wouldn't happen until a teacher had their own class.

> I don't think it [student-teacher relationships] will be quite like…the relationship with teachers. I don't think it would be quite as bad because you'd be in control of your own classroom…it will [then] be a lot easier to manage with the other teachers.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Jessica had previously undertaken a Professional Experience placement where her Colleague Teacher was changed immediately prior to her arrival. This last minute change caused her to feel that she was a burden and an inconvenience in the fast-paced activity of the school setting, and staff relationships were initially awkward to develop, as she explained;

> After a few weeks, it was fine…but at first, they're [staff] sort of looking at you as an inconvenience…I don't like the idea that I'm being a pain in the arse to someone...I'm also quite aware…I hear them [teachers] talking to other people about all their pressures, all this stuff they've got to do and then they've got to look after me as well and I just feel terrible for it.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Jessica reported that this experience was not particularly negative but Sue found that even though her relationship with her colleague teacher was sound, there was difficulty in being in a staffroom where tense relationships were present;

> I had good colleague teachers so that was helpful, they were all quite friendly, sometimes a little bit bitchy…It wasn't nice…think you should have respect for your fellow teachers…you're not always going to get along with them but to actually say it [disparaging comments] in front of

> a student teacher, I don't think that's very good at all.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Kim described her colleague teacher as supportive and open and observed that even in the hectic busy environment of a secondary school, teachers remained approachable;

> They've all been very nice… supportive too…they're used to…constant change and so none of the teachers has had that [dismissive because you are only there for a short time] sort of reaction to me.
>
> (Kim, During-PE2, First-year)

Emma and Michael recalled their experiences with favoured teachers they considered to have a significant impact on their lives as learners and the relationship of trust and respect that was developed as a result. Emma valued the effort that the teacher made to establish relationships;

> My Year 5 teacher…you have a relationship of trust…she was understanding, she was always available to talk. I think she built a relationship with the entire class and made everybody in the class feel important and special.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

For Michael, expertise and opportunities to access this were important;

> He just had a wealth of experience and knowledge and there was the way he passed it on…he was very…approachable, you could talk to him…we didn't have deep and meaningful [conversations] or anything, but…[you could] have a joke.
>
> (Michael, During-PE2, Second-year)

Emma also emphasised that building open relationships of trust was important to be able to assist her students when needed. She was also concerned about the emotional investment she might need to make;

> I am a very emotional person and I would get emotionally attached…if they build…a relationship of trust with you. They'll come to you more with their problems and…hope that you can help them.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sarah's concerns related to maintaining the boundary between 'friends' and 'friendly'. Although she clearly articulated her perceptions about maintaining professional teacher-student relationships, she also recognised it may be difficult to achieve this;

> I don't want to be friends with them…liking me, respecting me as a teacher, as a person but not as a friend, I don't have unrealistic expectations as far as that goes…maintaining the balance between teacher relationship and friendship relationship with the students [will be challenging].
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michael acknowledged the importance of developing strong teacher-student relationships, and although some pre-service teachers worried that they may develop an unprofessional attachment to their students, Michael was confident this would not be of concern to him, as he emphasised;

> I think there's a fine line…you don't want to go too far, you don't want the kids [to] think you're mates…[be] familiar, yeah you're not mates, definitely not.
>
> (Michael, During-PE2, Second-year)

Judy suggested that the teacher-student relationship was one of disparate power. She commented about the awkward management of power between students and teachers and how this might make management of them difficult;

> Sometimes it is a good relationship that the teacher has with students but it's a little uneasy because they're with the adult…but the adult is still up there, you are still down here…it feels a bit weird.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

Others acknowledged the importance of well-developed teacher-student relationships to enhance teaching and learning and student achievement, including the importance of trust;

> I think that if you don't feel comfortable with a teacher or you can't trust them, then you're not going to value their teaching.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michelle also emphasised the need for individualised knowledge of students as fundamental to relationships;

> Ideally…I'd like to have strong relationships with each and every student and be able to know them well enough so I know the best way that they learn.
>
> (Michelle, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Equally, Nigel highlighted what he thought fundamental underpinnings of all relationships;

> They always say you're not here to be liked, you've got to find the line and keep the line and I do agree with that…but if you don't like the students and the students don't like you, nothing's going to be happening in that class.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Perceptions generated from previous personal experience also featured within these qualitative responses, as Sarah highlighted;

> Well for me personally if I liked and respected a teacher I listened a lot more and I was more willing to participate in activities in class.
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michelle acknowledged a potential difficulty in establishing relationships with some students in the class and maintaining consistency between them;

> I think that it's only natural that some students, you'll form more of a connection to and…vice-versa…so obviously that sort of favouritism or pet thing does come into it.
> (Michelle, Post-PE2, Second-year)

#### 4.5.4.12 Managing students' behaviour will be very difficult for me (Item 36).

First-year participants were confident that behaviour management (Item 36) presented little if any challenge (45.24%), 38.10% were neutral in their response with only 16.67% agreeing that this factor may be perceived to be challenging. Similar results were observed in the second-year cohort with only a slight elevation (8.97%) in agreement compared to the first–year participants. See Figure 49.


*Figure 49*. Managing students' behaviour will be very difficult for me (Item 36).

Some participants, such as William, declared that behaviour management was of little concern but later acknowledged a potential deficient in his skills;

> Behaviour management?...we used to call it discipline...I have to admit that is an issue...I don't really know how to deal with the kid if he just gave me the finger and said "you can't do anything with me", and he is pretty much right.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michelle approached her discussion of the topic in a similar way, initially confident and then upon reflection, more hopeful of not encountering too many behaviour challenges;

> I don't want to sound too conceited...but I hope that my...attitude towards them [students] is going to be...positive enough and strong enough

> [in]…hopefully, that will exude so there won't be too many behavioural issues coming up.
> (Michelle, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Nigel shared a key focus area for his behaviour management. He was determined to ensure that he followed through on any ultimatums he gave to students. He was sure that his firm no-nonsense approach would reduce the risk of appearing inconsistent;

> Back-up your stuff, back-up what you say, don't back down…I understand the situations change, the circumstances change…but that's different from backing down…there's no favouritism.
> (Nigel, Post-PE2, Second-year)

Simon was more concerned about managing a number of students in an MDT workshop setting and the logistics of managing behaviour and maintaining a safe work environment;

> Behaviour management [will be my greatest challenge]…I find it…difficult to be working with a child, there say, and then you're still watching those over there…just keeping the class occupied whilst you're trying to give one-to-one [support].
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Like Simon, Sue was concerned about her ability to manage behaviour, not out of logistical concerns but rather a personal difficulty with conflict;

> Behaviour management [will be challenging] definitely…I'm an emotional person and…I don't like conflict…I think that's going to be difficult…just having the right words to say at the right time to calm the situation.
> (Sue, Post-PE2, Second-year)

With no actual classroom experience, Sophie was informed by what she described as 'horror stories' and hearsay which made her anxious about behaviour management in the future;

> I've heard [stories] in the past …where if a child is swearing you can't necessarily tell them off for it...I've…heard…the horror stories where the teacher has said "well her mother lets her swear, so I can't stop it".
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

#### 4.5.4.13 Managing the behaviour of students with diagnosed conditions such as ADD or ADHD will be very challenging for me (Item 37).

At the time of this study, the diagnosis of attention deficient disorders and associated behavioural needs were topical in Australian classrooms, in particular behaviours that impact upon learning and accepted classroom behaviours (Wright, 2006).

Results for both Items 36 and 37 for both cohorts were identical. Other than Michelle, a second-year pre-service teacher making mention of ADHD as a diagnosed student condition that may present in the classroom, no other mention was made through qualitative responses. See Figure 50.

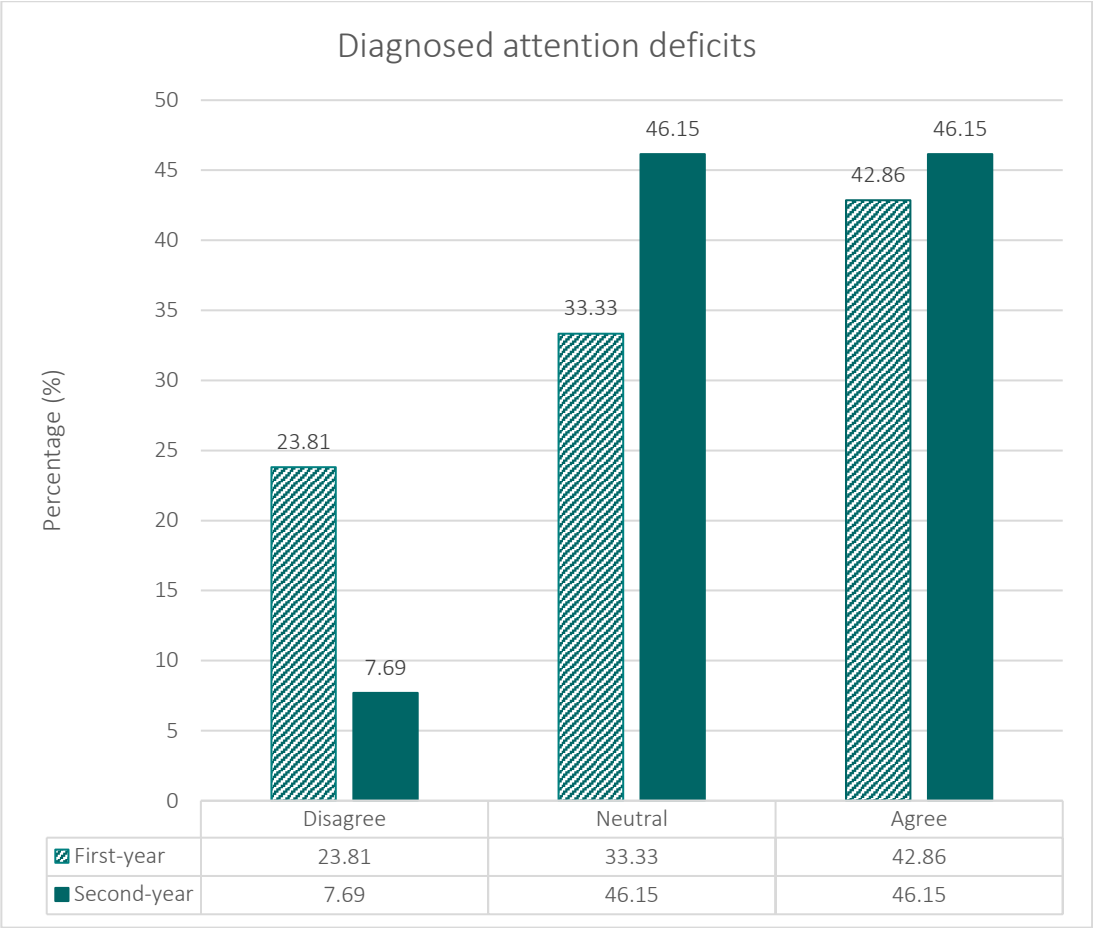



*Figure 50.* Managing the behaviour of students with diagnosed conditions such as ADD or ADHD will be very challenging for me (Item 37).

#### 4.5.4.14 Dealing with violent parents and violent students will be very difficult for me (Item 38).

Item 38, the final item in Part B of the initial questionnaire asked participants to indicate the level of challenge presented by the incidence of school-based violence. Results for items pertaining to behaviour management and dealing with students with diagnosed deficit disorders were identical to those recorded for the level of challenge presented for school-based violence. See Figure 51.

Similarly, for managing diagnosed attention deficits in the classroom, no mention was made of pre-service teacher concerns regarding school-based violence through qualitative data collection.

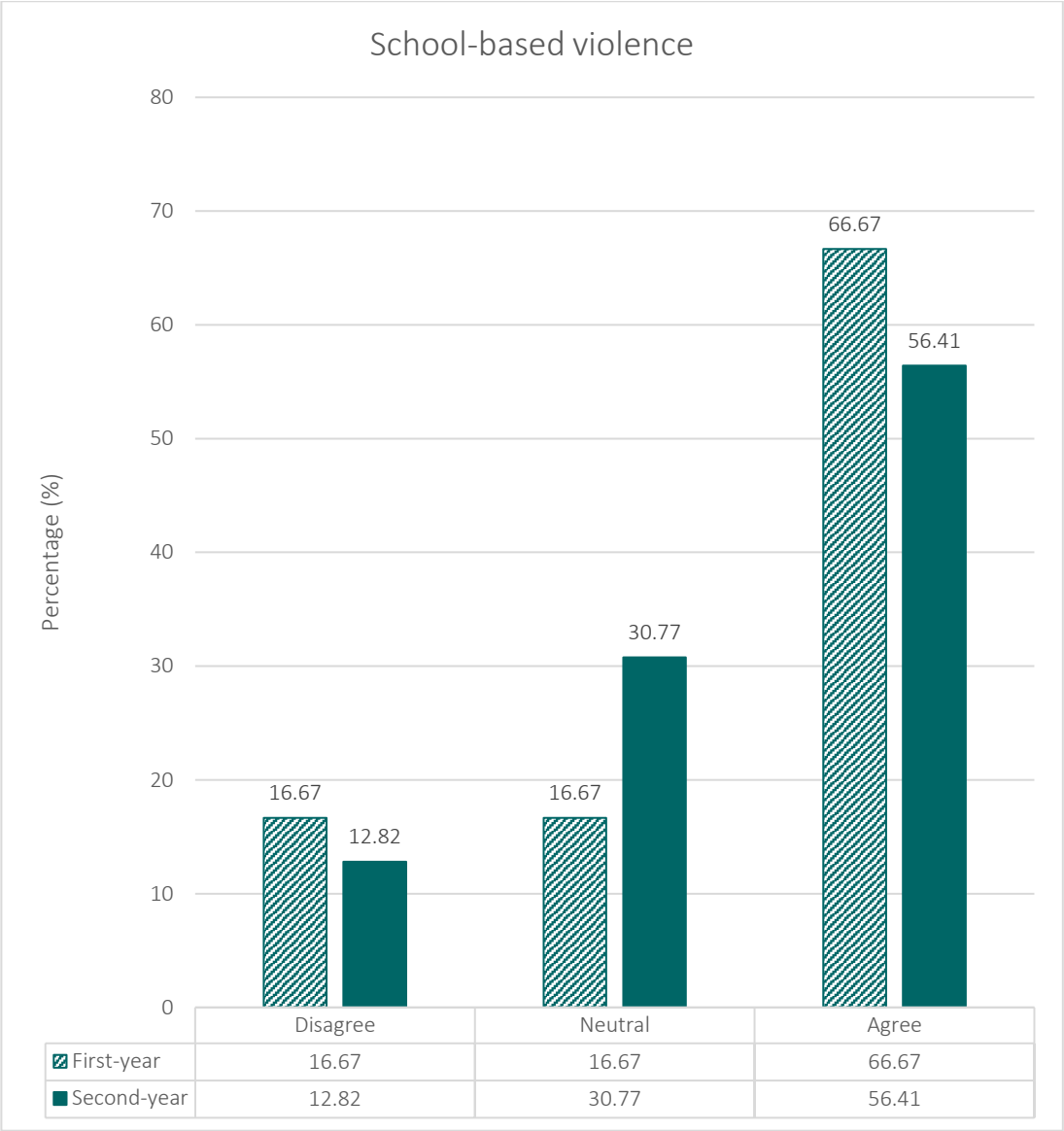



*Figure 51*. Dealing with violent parents and violent students will be very difficult for me (Item 38).

Items 23 to 38 of the initial questionnaire sought the pre-service teachers' perceptions of the level of challenge posed by a variety of expected competencies. Extensive cross tabulation and statistical analysis were carried out on all 38 items to determine if any significant associations were detected using Chi-square statistic and the Likelihood ratio See Table 36.

Table 37.

*Percentage of significant and highly significant associations regarding required competencies and relationship-based items.*

| | Required competencies | | Relationships | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Year cohort** | **First-year** | **Second-year** | **First-year** | **Second-year** |
| **Significant** | 25.64% | 18.80% | 0.00% | 66.67% |
| **Highly significant** | 11.96% | 14.53% | 100% | 0.00% |

Items 1 – 22 have been reported in their relevant sections; however, closer examination of items related to required competencies revealed a division. Both first and second year- pre-service teachers demonstrated a number of significant and highly significant associations between Items 23 to 32 and Items 36 to 38. Staff, parent and student relationships appeared to relate to each other with the exception of a highly significant association between all three relationship categories and behaviour management (Staff $_{LX}^{2}(4)=22.162$, $p<0.01$, Parents $_{LX}^{2}(4)=16.936$, $p<0.01$, Students $_{LX}^{2}(4)=21.168$, $p<0.01$). A cluster of associations was evident between helping children to succeed, sharing knowledge and being a positive role model for the first-year cohort. Of the 117 cross tabulations performed for required competencies data, 25.64% were found to be significant and 11.96% highly significant for the first-year cohort and 18.80% and 14.53% respectively for the second-year cohort.

### 4.5.5 Part C (Items 1-3)

Part C of the Stage One questionnaire allowed for open-ended responses. Participants were asked to nominate the three most challenging and rewarding aspects of teaching, as well as what they thought being a beginning teacher would be like. Key terms provided by respondents in Part C were identified and thematically analysed to form specific recoded groups. The recoded key terms are outlined in Table 38.

Table 38.

*Questionnaire 1, Part C - Recoded themes of open-ended responses.*

| Part C item | Themes - Responses | Themes - Recoded |
|---|---|---|
| Item 1: Challenging aspects of teaching | Behaviour management | **Behaviour management** |
| | Conflict resolution, Relationship issues | **Relationships** |
| | Assessment, Reporting, Planning, Teaching, IT, Curriculum, Finding employment, Workload | **Work related tasks** |
| | Balancing home and work, Anxiety, Expectations of others, working with those living with disabilities, Maintaining motivation, Evaluating own performance, finding all areas personally challenging | **Personal issues** |
| | Teaching at the right level, Poor pay, Poor collegial support, Organisation, Time management, Child welfare, Limited resources or time, Pastoral care, Engaging students, Bureaucracy, Class size | **Professional issues** |
| Item 2: Rewarding aspects of teaching | Travel, Ethical employment, Job security, Professional development | **Professional rewards** |
| | Remembered positively by students, Building community, Family friendly hours/holidays, Variety, Overcoming difficulty, Respect and status, Role model, Self-fulfilling | **Personal rewards** |
| | Instil a passion for learning in others, Sharing knowledge, Stimulating or educating a child's mind, Student achievement, Developing students socially and emotionally | **Educating students** |
| | Connecting with children, Influencing a child's life/future, Relationships and interactions | **Nurturing students** |
| Item 3: What will teaching be like? | Challenging, Emotionally taxing, Frustrating, Hard work, busy, Intense/passionate, Mentally challenging, stressful, Thankless, Poor financial rewards, Difficult students | **Challenging** |
| | Rewarding, Sense of community, Exciting, Contributing to the bigger picture, Creativity, Fun, Joy, Confidence, Helping, Connecting with students, Rewarding, Seeing children grow and learn, Self-fulfilling, Supportive colleagues, Reasonable income | **Rewarding** |
| | Improving with time, Administrative, Pleasant work environment, Share knowledge /enthusiasm, Travel, Planning/ content/ programming, Consistent/ fair/ compassionate, Flexible/ approachable/ professional | **Professional Development** |

#### 4.5.5.1 What do you consider to be the three most challenging aspects of teaching? (Part C: Item 1).

Both first and second-year participants were invited to identify elements of teaching that they anticipated they may find challenging (Item 1). Pre-service teachers provided 29 key challenges that were determined through analysis to belong to five categories: behaviour management, relationships, work related tasks, personal issues and professional issues.

Of the total number of terms offered by the first year pre-service teachers, 18.25% related directly to behaviour management, slightly less than those offered by the second-year cohort (21.70%). This slightly higher frequency of behaviour management submissions by the second-year cohort could have been influenced by observing behaviour management interactions whilst on Professional Experience or through specialised units of the ITE program. See Figure 52.

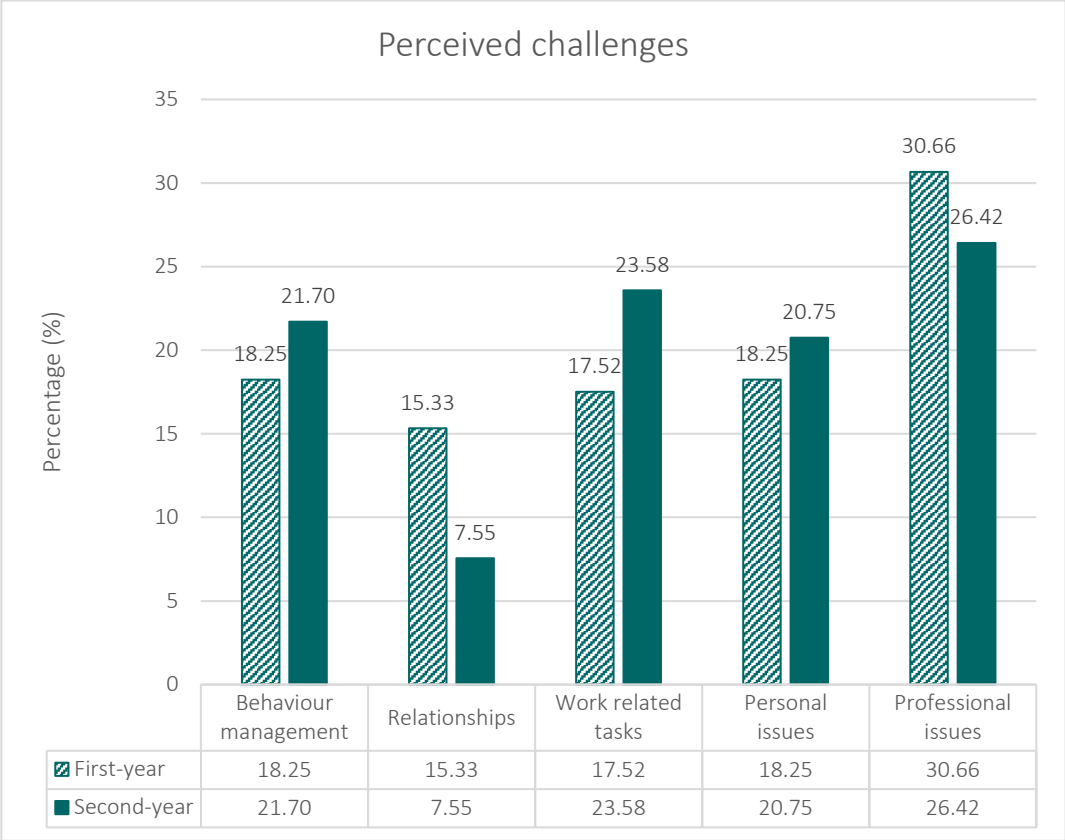



*Figure 52*. What do you consider to be the three most challenging aspects of teaching? (Part C: Item 1).

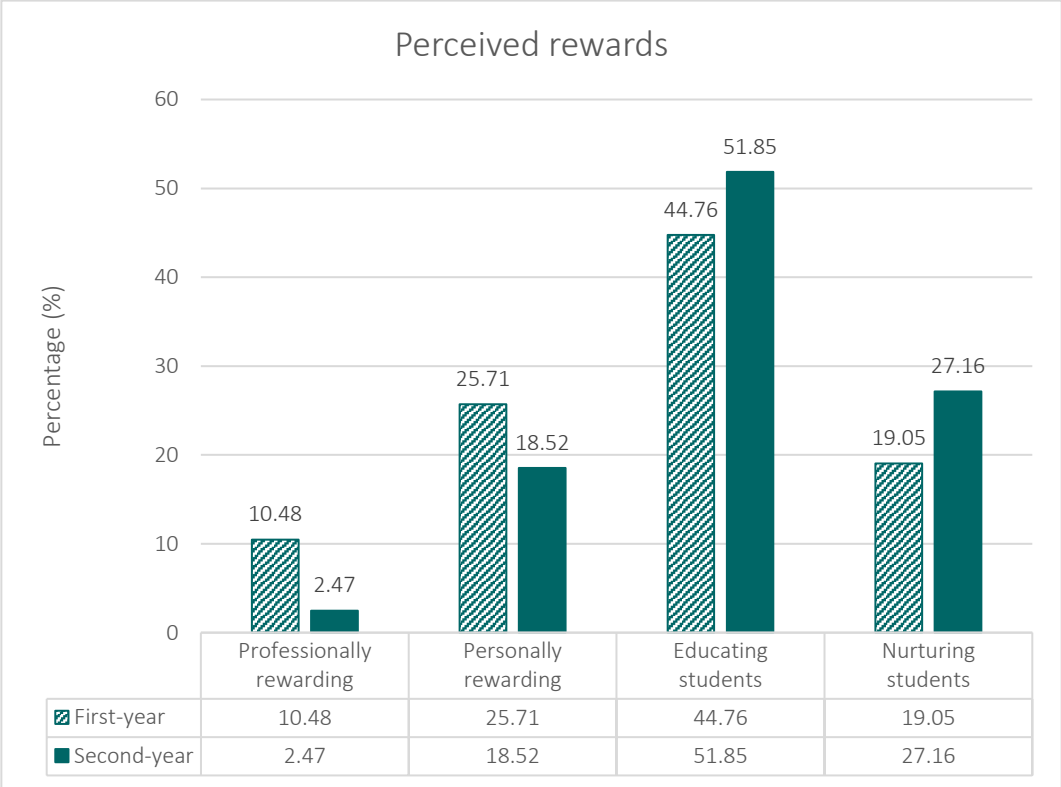
Consideration of school-based relationships, including those with staff, parents and students, produced responses that were relatively the lowest for both the first (15.33%) and second-year cohorts (7.55%).

Work related tasks (first-year 17.52%, second-year 23.58%) and personal issues (first-year 18.25%, second-year 20.75%) such as balancing work and home life, and anxiety were mentioned more by second-year than by first-year participants. First-year pre-service teachers indicated that professional issues such as time management, getting enough support and limited resources were of more concern than to them (30.66 %) than the second-year participants (26.42%).

#### 4.5.5.2 What do you consider to be the most attractive or rewarding aspects of teaching? (Part C: Item 2).

Due consideration was given to the rewarding aspects of teaching by the participants of this study (Item 2). Twenty-one rewards identified by participants were allocated to four key categories during analysis: *professional rewards*, *personal rewards*, *educating students* and *nurturing students*.

Although both cohorts recognised professional rewards of teaching such as the opportunity to travel, sound job security and the ability to develop professionally (first-year: 10.48 %, second-year: 2.47%), a greater emphasis was placed upon the intrinsic personal rewards of being remembered positively by students, respect and status, being a role-model and having a job that was self-fulfilling, with some recognition of family friendly hours and holidays (first-year: 25.71 %, second-year: 18.52%). See Figure 53.




| | Professionally rewarding | Personally rewarding | Educating students | Nurturing students |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| First-year | 10.48 | 25.71 | 44.76 | 19.05 |
| Second-year | 2.47 | 18.52 | 51.85 | 27.16 |

*Figure* 53. What do you consider to be the most attractive or rewarding aspects of teaching? (Part C: Item 2).

For both cohorts when recognising the most rewarding aspects of teaching, participants focussed primarily upon educating (first-year: 44.76 %, second-year: 51.85%). The rewards of teaching reportedly were not necessarily what they obtained from the experience but rather what they were able to provide to those in their care, with the second-year cohort indicating the value of nurturing students (27.16%) more so than their first-year counterparts (19.5%).

#### 4.5.5.3 Briefly describe what you think being a teacher will be like (Part C: Item 3).

Key terms regarding what they believed teaching would be like, resulted in 34 terms recoded into 3 groupings: 'challenging', 'rewarding' and 'professional development'. Both cohorts recognised that professional development would be a feature of the profession both through opportunities to expand their own knowledge and learning and the development of efficacy over time, improving the teaching experience (first-year: 11.43 %, second-year: 15.24 %). Participants identified challenging and rewarding elements to form the majority of the teaching experience (first-year: 88.58 %, second-year: 84.75%). What was notable was when pre-service teachers were asked what teaching would be like; they shared an almost equal proportion of rewards and challenges. The phrase 'rewarding and challenging' repeatedly appeared in the data and was reflected in frequencies observed for both cohorts. See Figure 54.

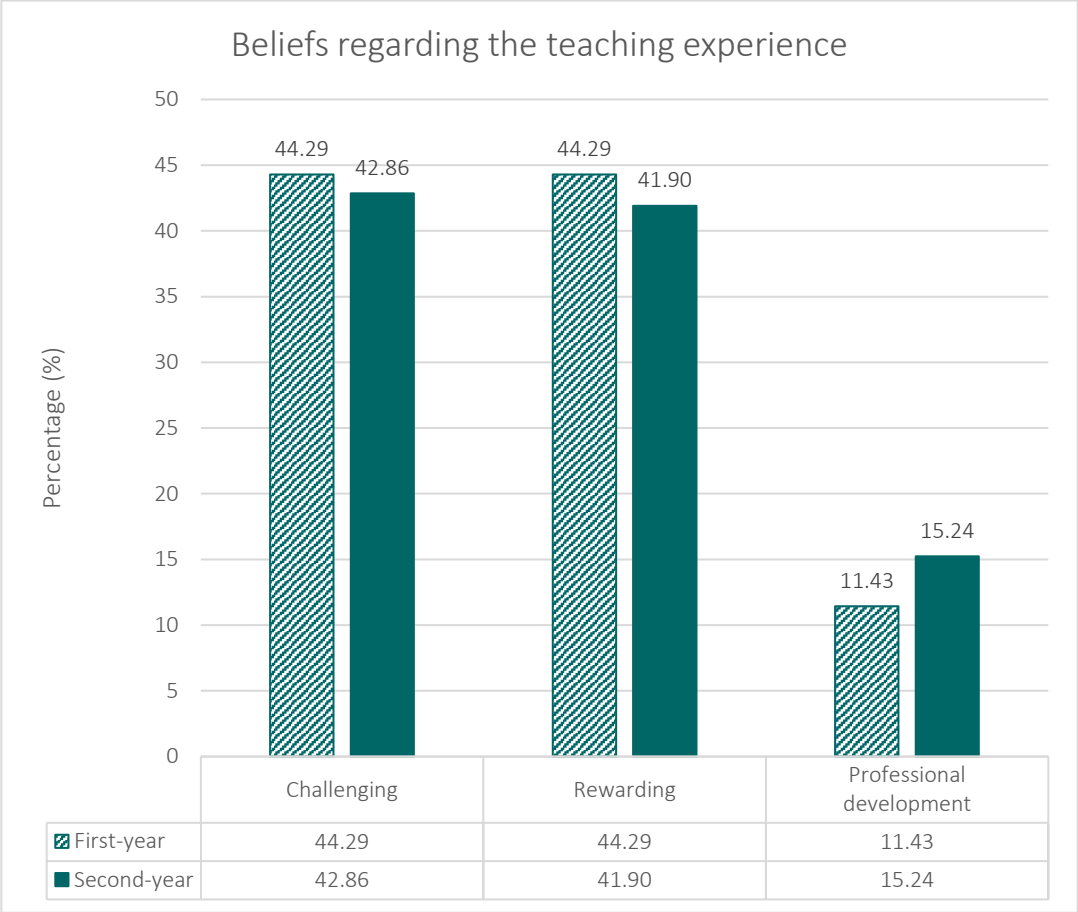



*Figure 54*. Briefly describe what you think being a teacher will be like (Part C: Item 3).

## 4.6 Summary

The results related to Research Questions 1 and 2 have been presented within this chapter with data from the initial questionnaire supplemented by the lived experiences of the participants. The demographic profile and preferences of both first and second-year pre-service teachers were shared, identifying their backgrounds and teaching intentions for the future. Their expressed thoughts were captured in the initial Pre-Professional Experience interview revealing the diverse motivators and embedded beliefs about teaching held by these pre-service teachers.

In addition, the understandings, perceptions and beliefs regarding the teaching profession were presented as the initial benchmark to which later comparisons are to be made, addressing Research Question 4: *What contextual, personal or professional issues may have led to any changing perceptions of these pre-service teachers?*

The following chapter will focus on the initial first-year cohort and address the Research Question 3: *As the pre-service teachers progressed through their initial teacher education program and ultimately when they commenced their first teaching experience, how have their perceptions changed?*

This considerable data set draws attention to some focal points of perception and belief about decisions drawing individuals into pre-service teaching and the sense they make of these experiences as they progress through their programs of study. More elaboration of these insights will be offered in the discussion of findings.

# Chapter 5

# Research Question 3

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data relating to the lived experiences of participants as they undertook pre-service teaching via Professional Experience placements in school settings. Their thoughts and perceptions were recorded at point-in-time through face-to-face interviews, classroom observations, weekly journal entries and the final questionnaire. Their experiences and changing perceptions emphasise their growth and developing professional identities.

This chapter focuses on the data generated through Research Question 3:

> *As the pre-service teachers progressed through their initial teacher education program from enrolment to completion, how do their perceptions change?*

In investigating this question, the quantitative and qualitative data derived from both the initial and final questionnaires, face-to-face interviews and weekly journal entries were analysed as a distinct data set. In some cases, where possible, classroom observations were made by the researcher to provide additional perspective about the qualitative data collected through other instruments. No formal data were recorded during classroom visits so as to not give the impression of assessment of the pre-service teacher. The classroom observations

assisted the researcher to make meaning of the qualitative data presented by participants during interviews.

## 5.2 Organisation of the chapter

The data obtained from the final questionnaire: Part A, Items 1-15, Part B, Items 1-3 and Part C, Items 1-4 were analysed and the findings are presented within this chapter. Supportive and clarifying statements were extracted from face-to-face interviews and are included to support the relevant items where appropriate. Elements of classroom teaching such as professional work conditions, family-enabling/supporting needs, working with children and required competencies were investigated and, most importantly, compared with participants' initial perceptions obtained at the commencement of their ITE program.

This chapter is organised by the sequence of items presented in the final questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, schematic and visual representation of results were utilised to make meaning of the responses obtained. Statistically significant relationships are expanded upon within the summary at the conclusion of the chapter.

## 5.3 Recoding of variables

As it was for Research Questions 1 and 2, a variety of quantitative and qualitative data were obtained through a mixed-method approach to data collection employed within this study. A wide array of expressions of understandings, perceived preparedness for and importance placed upon key elements of the teaching profession were shared by participants. Questionnaires, interviews and weekly journal entries revealed responses that consolidated from emerging themes into core themes through systematic analysis.

## 5.4 Quantitative data

Part A of the final questionnaire presented pre-service teachers with a five-point Likert scale: 'Strongly Disagree', 'Disagree', 'Neutral', 'Agree', and 'Strongly Agree'. As indicated, the researcher considered this data to be ordinal as opposed to interval (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2008). Low frequencies enabled a recoding of the categories to a three-point scale: 'Disagree', 'Neutral', and 'Agree' (McPherson, 2001). Items 1-15 were recoded to provide a clear indication of the participants' understanding and perceived preparedness for a number of key aspects of teaching. See Table 39.

Table 39.

*Questionnaire 3, Part A - Key areas of questioning, Items 1-15.*

| Item | | Topic | Key area |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Understanding of | Teachers Registration Board | Professional work conditions |
| 2 | | Obtaining good character checks | |
| 3 | | Professional code of conduct | |
| 4 | Understanding of | Support structures | Required competencies |
| 5 | | Programming and Curriculum | |
| 6 | | Student assessment | |
| 7 | | Reporting to parents | |
| 8 | | Inclusive planning | |
| 9 | | Inclusive practice | |
| 10 | | Gifted and talented planning | |
| 11 | | Medical emergencies | |
| 12 | | Mandatory reporting | |
| 13 | | Workplace relationships | |
| 14 | | ADHD/ADD | |
| 15 | | Public expectations | |

Part B of the final questionnaire invited participants to consider the importance they placed upon all four of the elements contained within the initial questionnaire data;

a. Professional work conditions
b. Family-enabling/supporting needs

c. Working with children

d. Required competencies

Three groups of statements, one from each of the four categories (above), were presented. Participants were asked to rank statements in order of importance, '1' to '4' (one being most important, four being least important). The order in which ranking occurred was then able to be compared to their thoughts expressed in the initial questionnaire regarding similar items. See Table 40.

Table 40.

*Categories and specific aspects of teaching.*

| Categories | Specific aspects of teaching included in final questionnaire | Similar item in initial questionnaire |
|---|---|---|
| **Professional work conditions** | Working overseas | Item 3 |
| | Job security | Item 4 |
| | Work environment | - |
| **Family enabling/supporting needs** | Family friendly hours | Item 12 |
| | Holidays | Item 15 |
| | Providing substantial Income | Item 16 |
| **Working with children** | Helping children to succeed | Item 18 |
| | Guiding children | Item 21 |
| | Providing stability to children | Item 21 |
| **Required competencies** | Working collaboratively | - |
| | Flexibility and adaptability | - |

## 5.5 Qualitative data

Consistent with data analysis methods outlined in Chapter 3, data have been divided into sections of responses, particular interview questions and then coded according to emerging themes (Creswell, 2008). Part C of the final questionnaire

presented the following three open-ended items and an invitation to add comments;

1. What do you consider to be the three most challenging aspects of teaching?
2. What do you consider to be the most attractive or rewarding aspects of teaching?
3. Imagine you are rewriting the Bachelor of Teaching program for the University of Tasmania. What areas of study would you expand or new topics you would include to better prepare beginning teachers such as yourself, for the reality of teaching?
4. Please feel free to add other comments regarding your pre-service teacher experience.

From the responses given, key terms were manually coded for responses to each of the four items resulting in:
Part C, Item 1 - 40 terms recoded to 5 categories,
Part C, Item 2 - 31 terms recoded to 4 categories,
Part C, Item 3 – 40 terms recoded to 6 categories, and
Part C, Item 4 – 15 terms recoded to 3 categories. See Table 40.

Table 41.

*Questionnaire 3, Part C - Recoded open-ended responses.*

| Part C Item | Themes – Responses | Themes - Recoded |
|---|---|---|
| **Item 1: Challenging aspects of teaching** | Behaviour management, dealing with students behaviour, working with disengaged kids, students, managing outside influences on the children | Behaviour management |
| | 'Difficult' students or colleagues, school politics, 'troubled kids', general relationships, frustration of working with teachers with a different personal philosophy regarding teaching | Relationships |
| | Planning, challenging students intellectually, differentiation, curriculum integration, student engagement, motivating students, pitching work at the correct level for the students | Work related tasks |
| | Judging children, time management, demonstrating in front the class, work/life balance, having to be a role model, being strong enough to cope with issues, being fair, being a team player, being a parent and a teacher, feeling competent, conforming to different ideas, starting afresh each day | Personal issues |
| | Diversity of students, meeting community expectations, lack of resources, advocating importance of subject areas, preparation, changing curriculum, maintaining an inclusive environment, busy – fast paced work, large class sizes, government directives, National testing | Professional issues |
| **Item 2: Rewarding aspects of teaching** | Student engagement, collegial relationships, travel, holidays, variety in work, working with interested students, own professional learning, a new start each year | Professional rewards |
| | Modelling a sense of self, fun job, seeing kids appreciate learning, people orientated profession, being proud of students, being accepted by students, creating the future, making a difference | Personal rewards |
| | Instil a love of learning, student development, teaching new skills, share interesting knowledge, teaching life skills, seeing students achieve, having 'light bulb' moments, student centred learning | Educating students |
| | Empowering students, positively influence students, watching children succeed, provide stability, help children, building positive relationships with the children, impacting children's lives, meeting children's needs | Nurturing students |

Table 41. Continued.

*Questionnaire 3, Part C - Recoded open-ended responses.*

| Part C Item | Themes – Responses | Themes - Recoded |
|---|---|---|
| Item 3: Imagine you are rewriting the B. Teach program for UTAS. What area of study would you expand or new topics you would include to better prepare beginning teachers such as yourself, for the reality of teaching? | TRB requirements, help to prepare for the job market, interview skills, development of e-portfolio for evidence, learning about career pathways | Department of Education & TRB |
| | First aid certificate, medical condition awareness | First Aid Certificate |
| | Inclusion, more specialist subjects, planning for severe disabilities – IEPs, lecturers with recent classroom experience, more role playing, more behaviour management, using technology, learning about 'play-ground' management, have visiting teachers come into the tutorials, planning for children with Down's syndrome, ADHD or ADD, religious education | Specialist/ Experienced lecturers |
| | Clear program structure, less theory more practical, more behaviour management learning early in the program, condense the program to one year, changes to program design, administrative changes, better partnership between schools and universities, align units with the Bachelor of Education | University issues |
| | Professional learning with certificates, More PE opportunities, less theory, reporting, parent/teacher interview preparation, workshops across curriculum areas, skill development, managing colleague teacher attitudes, returning to university for a week in the middle of PE to discuss with lecturers and seek peer support, less university work whilst on PE, more learning around day to day life in schools, more assessment attached to PE | Professional Experience |
| | Conflict resolution, units in child / teenager psychology | Psychology |
| Item 4: Any other comments regarding your beginning teacher experience. | Looking forward to starting work as a teacher, should have considered other programs | Personal reflection |
| | More rigorous teacher selection into the program, university may be helpful but just another hurdle to becoming a teacher, lack of communication within the program, more face-to-face content, disappointing professional performance of lecturers, stronger theory to practice integration needed, lack of flexibility for those studying masters and the B. Teach program at the same time, program needs restructuring, lecturers were good despite program structure | University issues |
| | Wonderful Professional Experience, more valuable experience than at university, Colleague teachers need to be screened for competency, include work preparation such as resume writing | Professional Experience |

## 5.6 Part A: Theory to practice integration

Part A of the final questionnaire sought responses about how the pre-service teachers considered that theoretical learning within the B. Teach program had prepared them for the rigours of classroom teaching, working in schools and meeting teacher competencies.

At the time of this study, in order to teach in any Tasmanian school system: independent, Catholic or government schools, teachers were required to register with the Teachers Registration Board of Tasmania (TRB). In Catholic and independent schools, teachers applied directly to the school for employment; whereas, in the public sector, teachers were also required to register with E-pool, a centrally managed database of available teachers for relief or fixed-term contract work. Item 1 sought pre-service teachers' understanding of the registration process as they approached graduation. Some participants with contacts within the education system may have already registered at the time of final data collection. The TRB will, when requested by a school unable to staff positions with qualified teachers, issue a Limited Authority to Teach (LAT), which allows pre-service teachers to be provisionally registered and employed, in their final semester of study. This practice occurs only in these circumstances and upon the specific request of the principal.

Tests for normality, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk, all revealed significant values ($P \leq 0.05$) indicating that data in Part A were not normally distributed. It is for this reason that non-parametric tests were conducted to further analyse the results (Field, 2009; Pallant, 2005). The Wilcoxon signed-rank test, the non-parametric equivalent of the dependent t-test was used to determine the significance of the data between the initial and final questionnaires for the same participants for a number of items.

Approximately a third of the participants (30.80%) agreed that they had a good understanding of the requirements and processes for application to the Teachers Registration Board and the Department of Education. A much great proportion (53.80%) disagreed. Although they were at the point of preparing for registration, they did not have a good understanding of the process with a further 15.40 % expressing uncertainty See Figure 55.


*Figure 55.* I have a good understanding of the requirements and processes for application to the Teachers Registration Board and the Department of Education (Item 1).

This general consensus was articulated by one participant, who suggested the need for more information within the B. Teach program about processes related to entering the profession;

> [We need] more about what actually happens when you get your qualification.
> (Participant 8, Final questionnaire)

Other participants raised concerns about how the program might support their transition into the profession, as they outlined;

> More PD related to skills we need…writing a CV (teaching one), job interview question examples…
> (Participant 20, Final questionnaire)

> Job preparation skills – TRB, interviews, selection criteria.
> (Participant 13, Final questionnaire)

> Direct input from the Ed [Education] Department to disseminate info [information] re policies.
> (Participant 1, Final questionnaire)

A range of clearances are required within Tasmania and other Australian states and territories to provide a mechanism for identifying pre-service teachers who are not suitable for pre-service teaching or entry on to the register of qualified and employable teachers. Of the cohort, 80.80% indicated they had a sound knowledge of the protocol for registering with the TRB and the Department of Education for employment. See Figure 56.

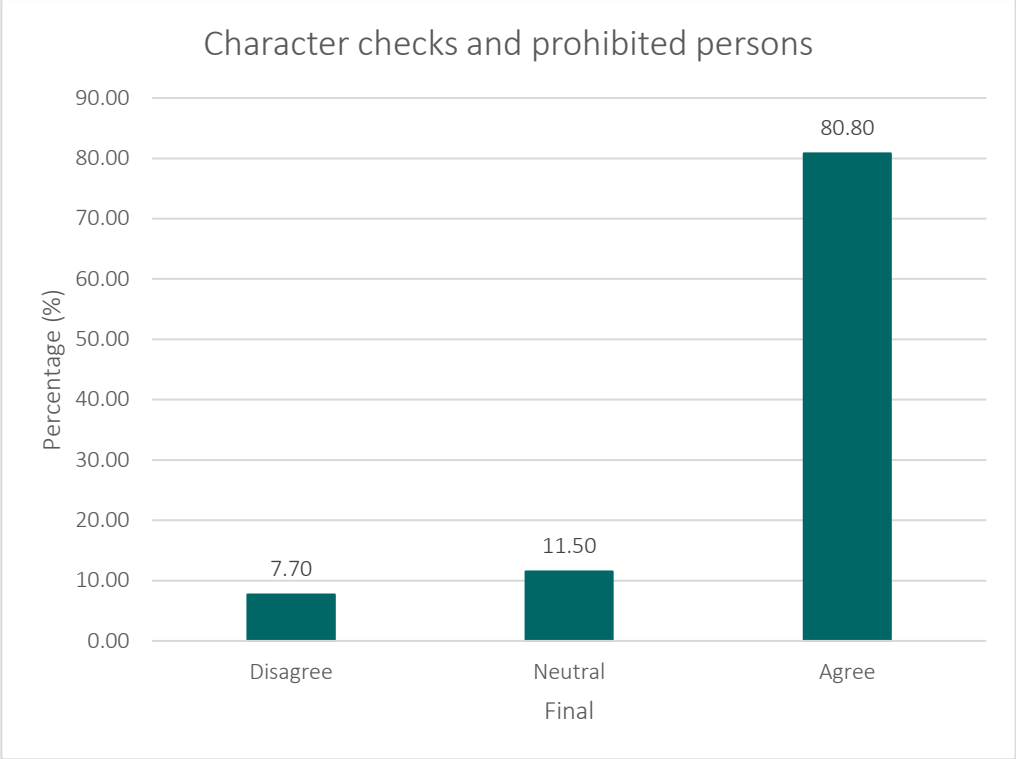



*Figure 56.* I am fully aware of the protocols for character checks and prohibited person's legislation (Item 2).

The expectation that pre-service teachers would demonstrate an awareness of the protocols for obtaining a Good Character check is observed somewhat in the data which indicates 61.50% of pre-service teachers considered themselves to have a good understanding regarding this fundamental part of professional induction. However, all pre-service teachers enrolled in the B. Teach program undertake a good character check prior to being placed in a school for Professional Experience, the result of 19.20% of participants who disagree or are unsure they understand the process was unexpected as the participants had already completed the process. See Figure 57.

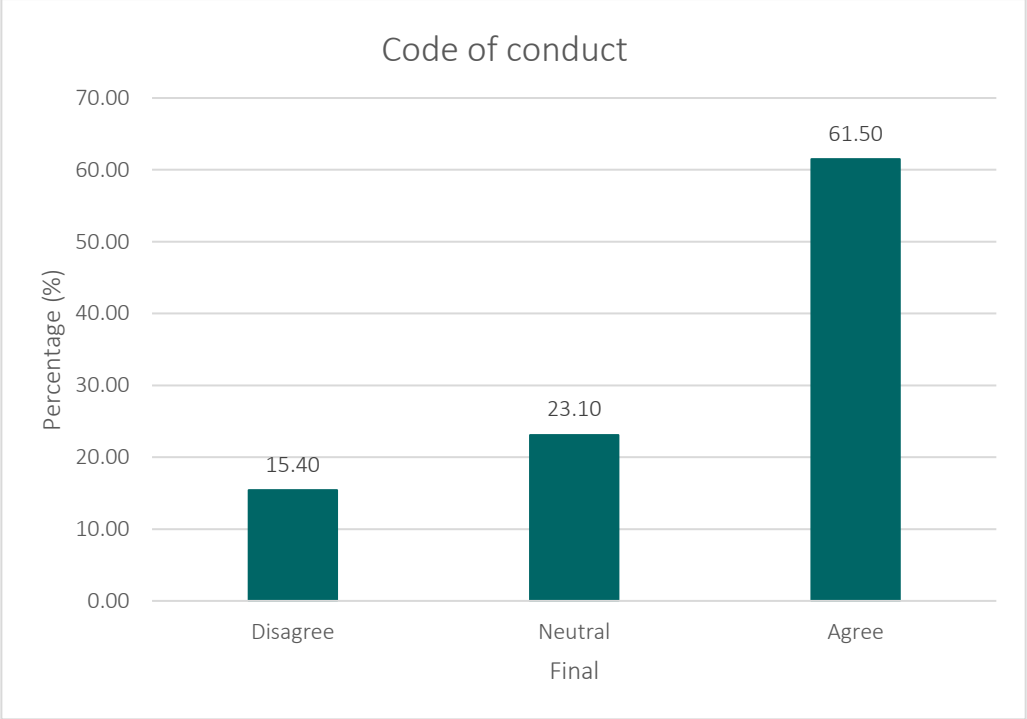



*Figure 57*. I have a good understanding of the professional code of conduct document issued by the Department of Education (Item 3).

Comparison between initial understandings about the support structures available to the cohort as newly enrolled pre-service teachers and final understandings at the conclusion of their program indicated a 14.84 % shift toward disagreement and a 6.03 % move to a neutral response. See Figure 58.

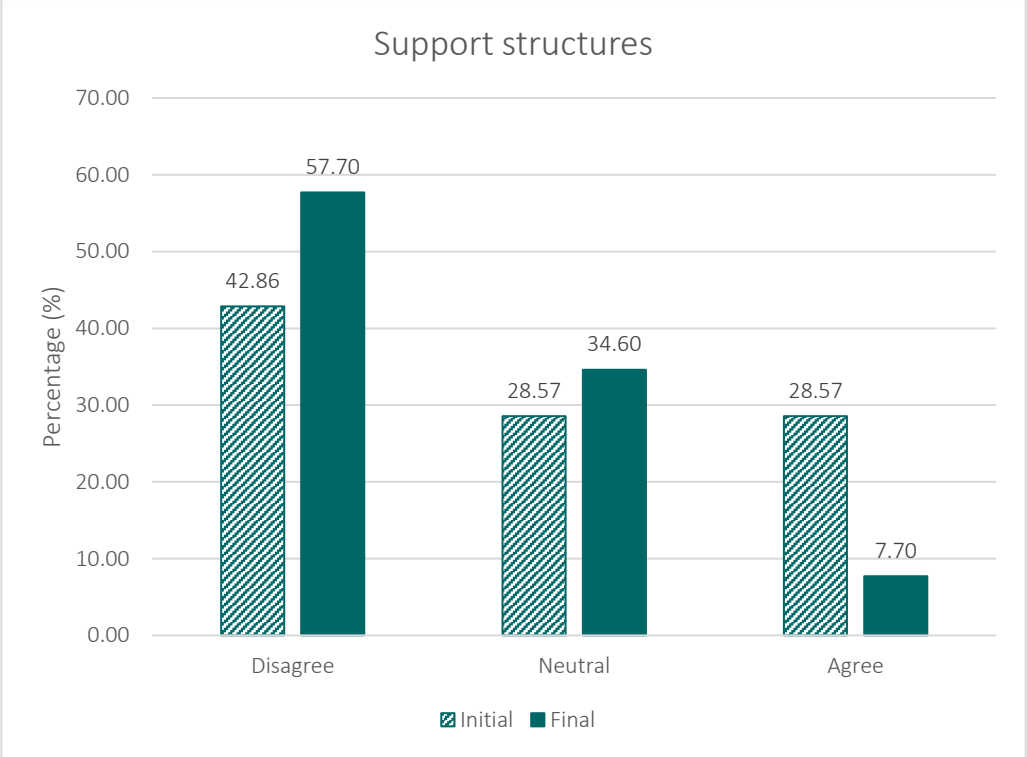



*Figure 58*. I am fully aware of the support structures and programs available to me as a beginning teacher (Item 4).

For pre-service teachers in the first-year cohort, their understanding of support structures available to them, expressed within the final questionnaire, was found to be significantly different from their initial understanding (Wilcoxon test $p<0.05$). This was reinforced by failure to mention support structures in Post-PE interviews or open-ended sections of the final questionnaire, with the exception of one participant who outlined the importance of collegial support for beginning teachers;

> The learning is just beginning. The road to becoming a teacher is very dependent on in school support from colleagues and staff.
> (Participant 12, Final questionnaire)

Another participant expressed the importance of having quality colleague teachers as a key source of support to assist them in their development,

highlighted to them through the experience of not having this level of support when needed;

> Colleague teachers need to fulfil a standard before being able to become one. Having a good CT is really important and if you don't [have one], it can really damage you.
>
> (Participant 6, Final questionnaire)

#### 5.6.1.1 Required competencies

The remaining items of Part A of the final questionnaire pertain to factors regarding the required competencies of classroom teaching. Items 5, 6 and 7 addressed factors considered to be teachers' core business: interpreting and delivering the curriculum, student assessment, and, reporting student achievement respectively.

A statistically significant increase in agreement of 39.92 % was observed in agreement between initial and final data collection (Wilcoxon test $p<0.05$). Upon final reflection, participants considered themselves well prepared to develop teaching programs and interpret the curriculum. See Figure 59.

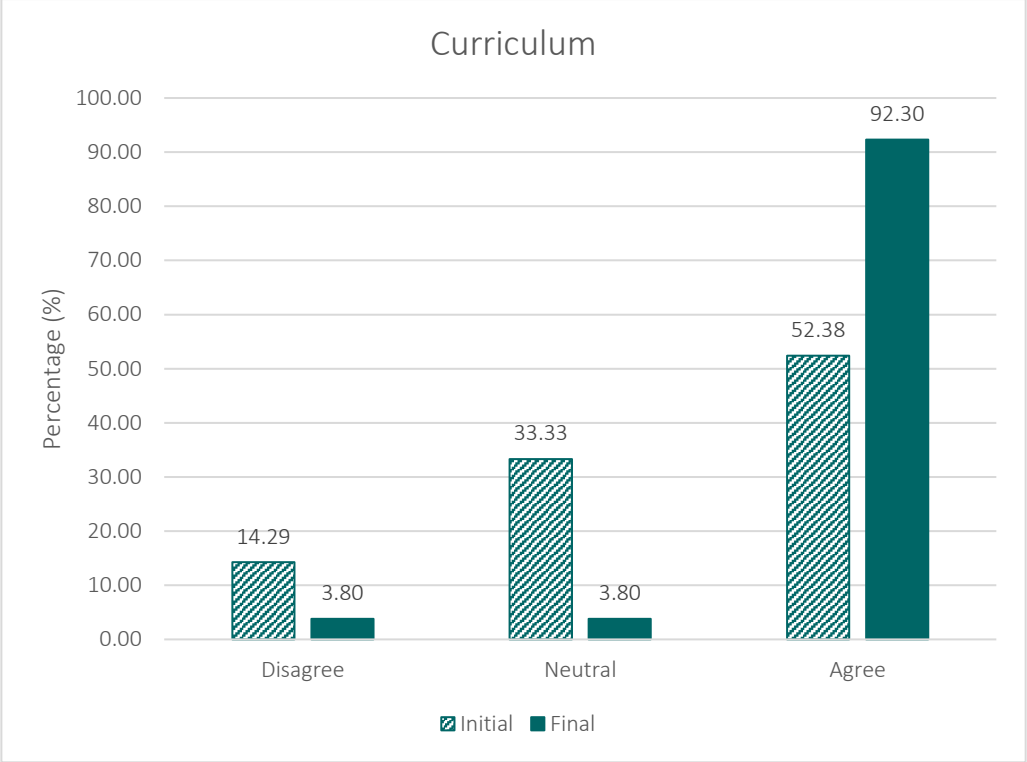



*Figure 59*. I am well prepared to develop teaching programs and interpret the curriculum (Item 5).

At the time of data collection, the B. Teach program focused teaching and learning arrangements around the current curriculum for Tasmanian schools - The Tasmanian Curriculum. As these pre-service teachers approached their first teaching experiences as graduate teachers, a new curriculum was implemented. Through individual units within the B. Teach program, students were made aware of impending changes. One participant voiced their concern about this significant change;

> Changing the course [sic] half way through has been awful… too many 'rule changes'…[sic]
> (Participant 13, Final questionnaire)

During Professional Experience, some beginning teachers were shielded from the change in curriculum by their colleague teachers. For Judy, her colleague teacher

kept her focus on small topics to be addressed rather than looking at the broader curriculum picture; as she reflected;

> …I haven't actually worried about that [curriculum changes] because it's been more topic focused.
> (Judy, Post-PE2)

For Kim, Professional Experience took place in a Catholic school, where the Essential Learning Framework had not been adopted.

> They don't run on the Essential Learnings here anyway because it's an independent school and they create their own [curriculum].
> (Kim, During-PE2)

One participant responded to this upheaval by suggesting that a mechanism for strengthening the theory to practice connection was to develop program assessments that were '…Authentic, schools-based curriculum assignments' (Participant 12, Final questionnaire).

Item 6 sought participants' understanding of requirements relating to student assessment. Despite the limited 'snapshot' that pre-service teachers acquired on Professional Experience about student progress, there was a statistically significant 31.10 % increase in the percentage (69.20 %) of participants who felt they possessed a good understanding of this domain ($p<0.05$). See Figure 60.

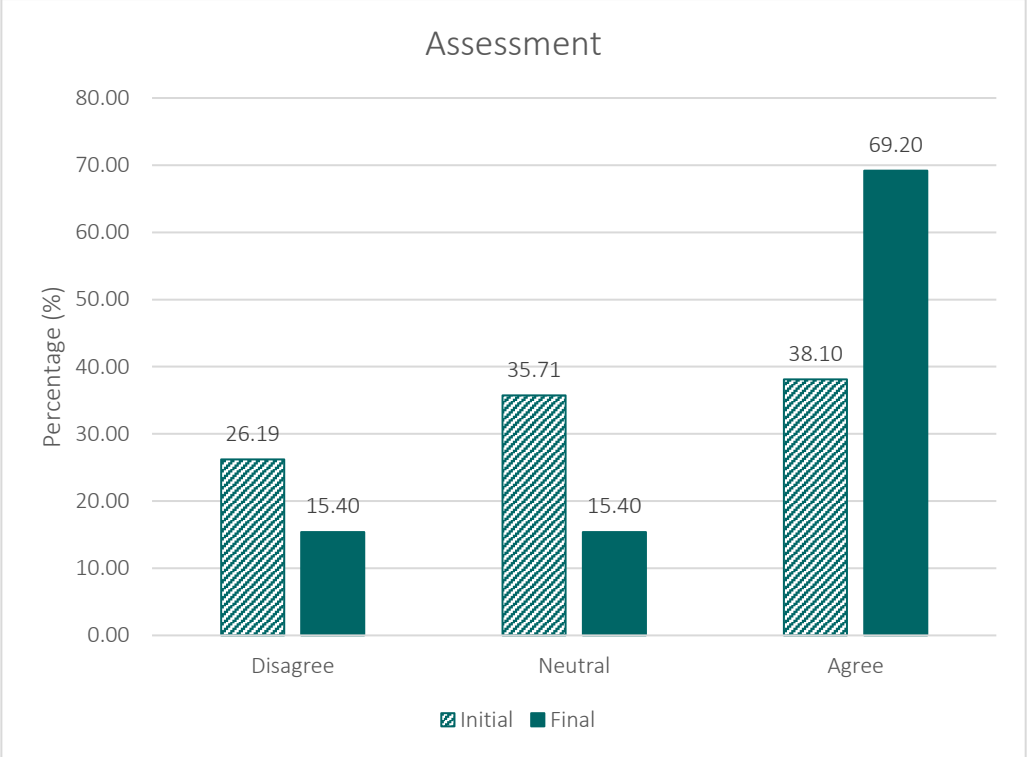



*Figure 60*. I have a good understanding of the required process of student assessment (Item 6).

Although most participants reported they had developed in their understanding of student assessment from the first data collection point, Sarah noted that learning specific assessment skills prior to Professional Experience would have been valuable;

> More focus on how to mark, create rubrics [and] create grade averages.
>
> (Sarah, Final questionnaire)

The lack of opportunity to participate in formal reporting processes within schools impacts most pre-service teachers. This lack of experience is reflected in the comparison of initial and final understandings of participants, showing no notable growth in understanding of their perceived preparedness to report to parents. This finding is supported by the calculation of the Wilcoxon test revealing no significant difference. See Figure 61.

Sarah emphasised this point with her desire for additional learning in this areas of preparing for Parent/Teacher interviews, report writing and keeping teacher diaries (Sarah, Final questionnaire).

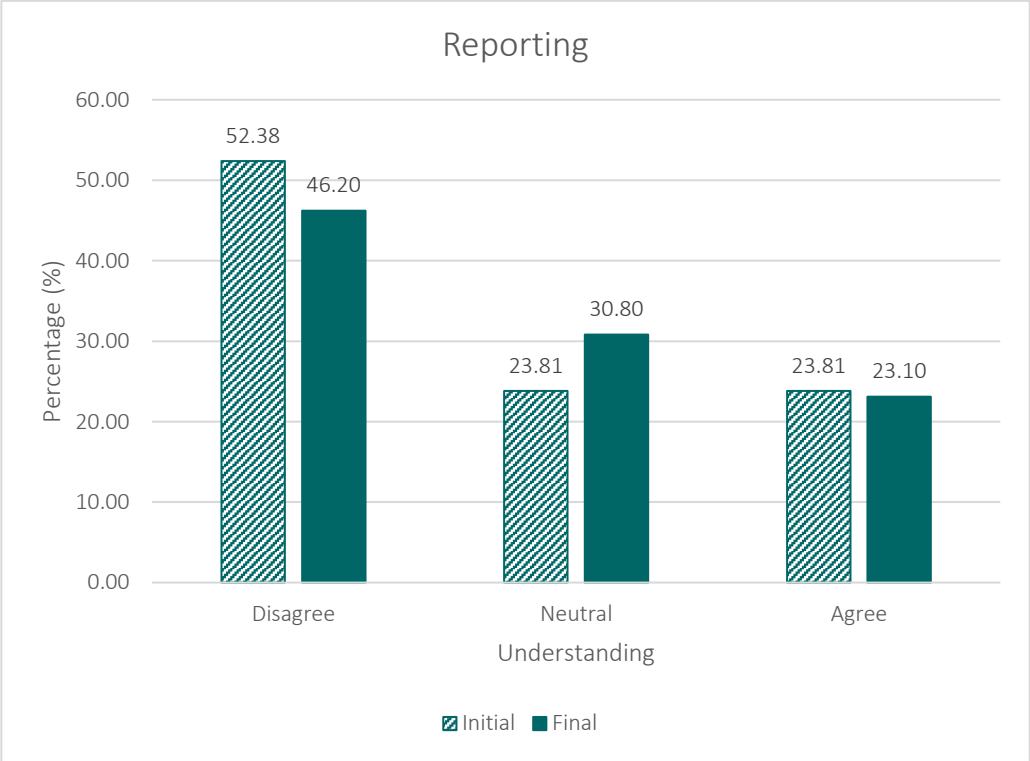



*Figure 61*. I am well prepared to report to parents in writing, and to conduct parent teacher interviews (Item 7).

Participants reported a sound understanding of planning to cater for the diverse needs of students living with disabilities (57.70 %) which was a substantial improvement on their initial perceptions (42.86%). A positive shift of 14.84 % increase in those considering their understanding to be good was reported. See Figure 62.

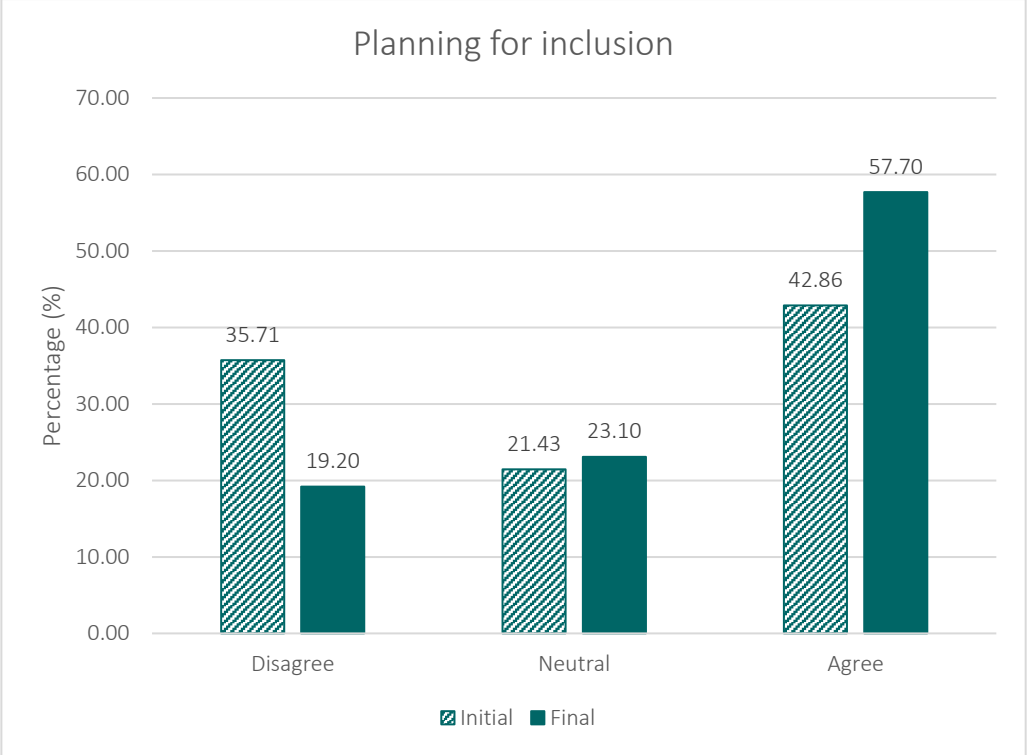



*Figure 62*. I have a good understanding of planning and programming for students with disabilities (Item 8).

Not all Professional Experience placements occurred within classrooms where students living with disability were present. As such, exposure and development in this area may be limited due to contextual factors beyond the individual or the content of the B. Teach program. Despite this limitation, pre-service teachers expressed more nuanced awareness and understandings of the range of student abilities and challenges present within all classrooms;

> There are quite a few who are just really low literacy levels so that just impedes their work no matter what their skills are and then we have one person in the class who is a special needs [student].
>
> (Kim, During-PE)

Kim highlighted that students with identified disabilities may work with specialised staff (in her case, a Teacher Assistant) who worked from an Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed by the teacher or a resource specialist. The

Teacher Assistant, in this instance, prepared programs and lessons in accordance with these plans. In these situations, planning for disabilities in the classroom may be undertaken by support or resource teachers rather than the regular classroom teacher. Nevertheless, exposure to the diversity of students' needs was evident to her.

According to the participants, planning for students with specific learning needs was not addressed in a specialised unit within the program, leading to a number of suggestions from pre-service teachers to make it so;

> More information on specific disabilities and support options we will have when out in the real world [would be helpful].
> (Participant 11, Final questionnaire)

> [There needs to be a] greater focus on special needs education, [on] practical based and include Individual Learning Programs [sic].
> (Participant 15, Final questionnaire)

> Practical help with planning for students with severe disabilities [is needed within the program].
> (Participant 19, Final questionnaire)

Item 9 emphasised that pre-service teachers within this cohort felt a decreased understanding of inclusive practices of 12.46 % and an increase of 17.93 % in neutral responses across the duration of their program. However, this was found to not be significant ($p>0.05$). See Figure 63.

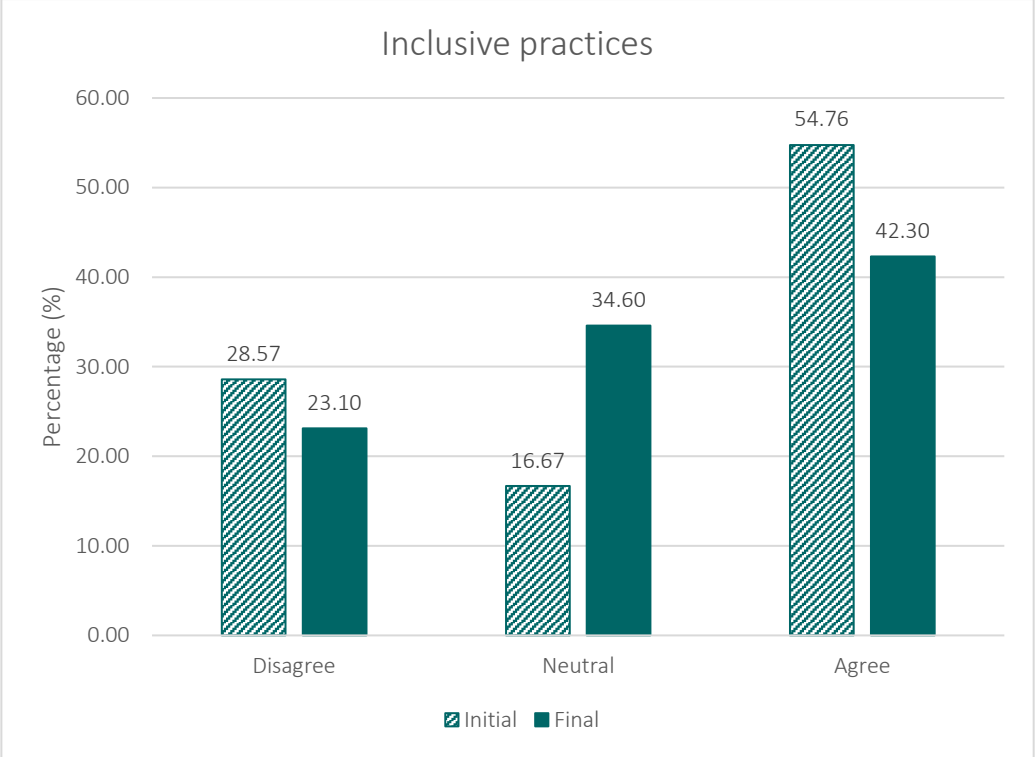



*Figure 63*. I am well prepared to teach students with disabilities in an inclusive classroom (Item 9).

Connected to this previous trend, participants also identified that they had learning needs in relation to the implementation of inclusive practices; as the following participants emphasised;

> [We need more information on] how to be inclusive in the classroom for kids with Down's syndrome.
>
> (Participant 5, Final questionnaire)

> [We need] specific information about disabilities and real examples of how real teachers have approached [inclusion].
>
> (Participant 4, Final questionnaire)

Participant 15 reflected more broadly on inclusive practice in the classroom, in terms of further learning. She emphasised a need for 'Practical training in teaching for diversity, not just theoretical understanding.'

Accordingly, virtually no change in neutral responses was observed (Initial: 28.57 %, Final: 28.00 %), and a shift towards disagreement was demonstrated with a non-significant ($p>0.05$) decrease in understanding (33.00 %, 38.33 %). See Figure 64.

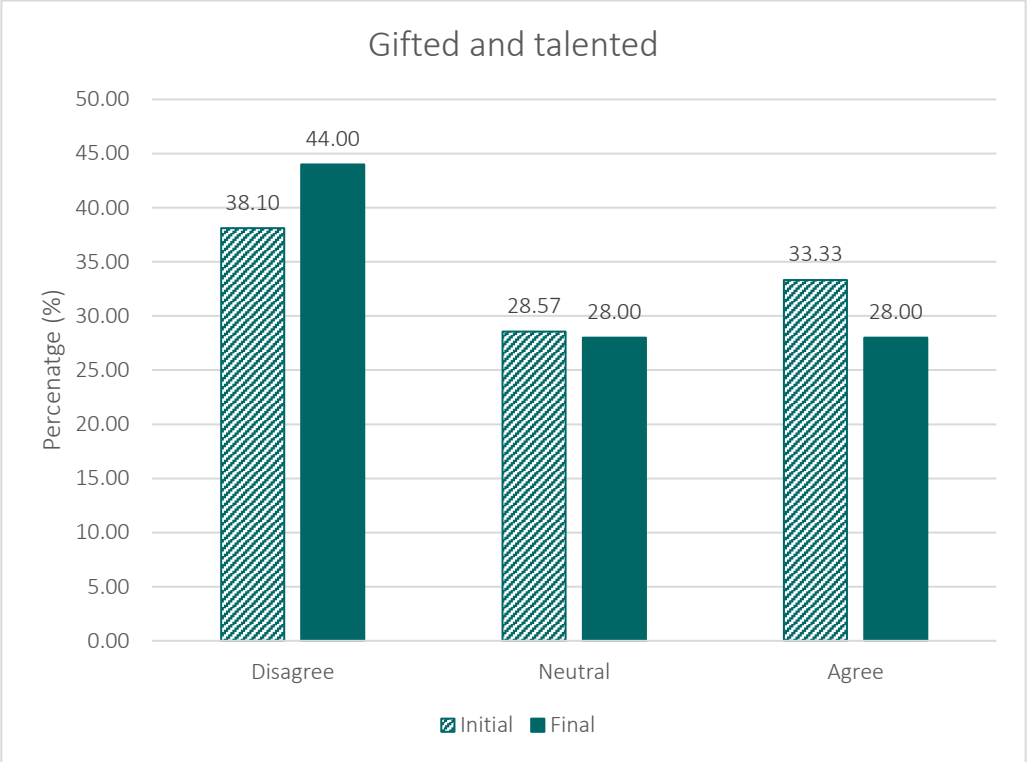



*Figure 64*. I have a good understanding of planning and programming for gifted and talented students (Item 10).

Item 11 sought pre-service teachers' level of awareness regarding teachers being part of the child's care, including tending to medical needs. Responses indicated that almost half of the cohort did not possess a good understanding of what is required of them in this area. See Figure 64. Development of this key element of duty of care increased significantly ($p<0.05$) by the final data collection event, revealing an increase of 42.15 %. Fewer pre-service teachers continued to feel they lacked understanding with a decrease of 39.92 % and little downward shift was observed in those that felt uncertain (2.23 %). See Figure 65.

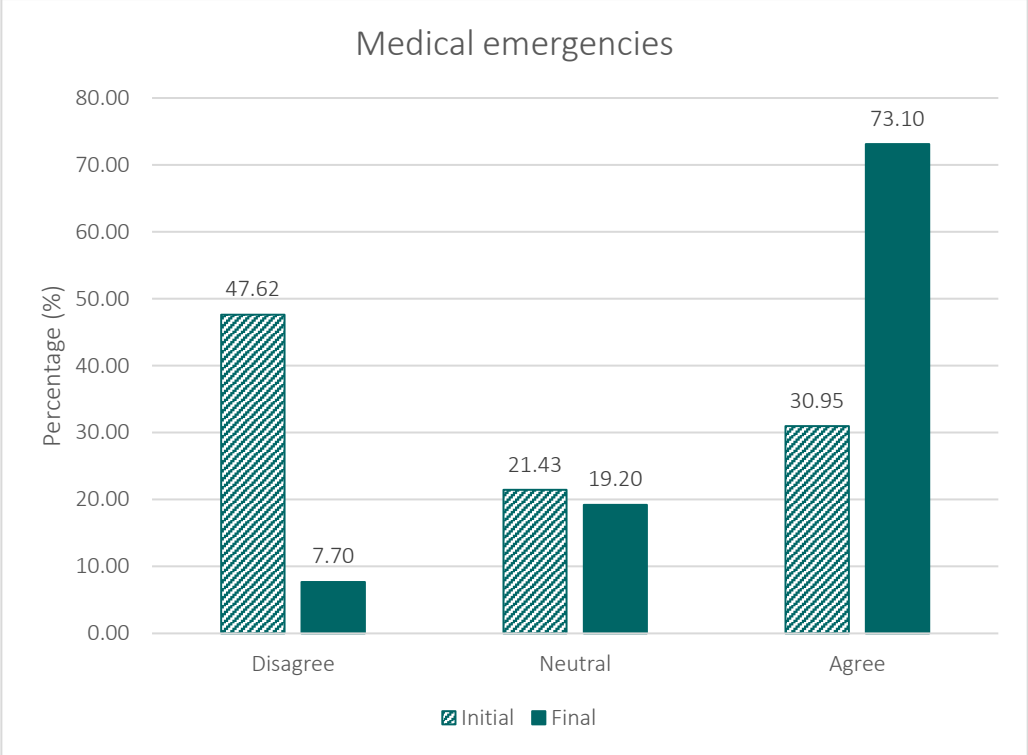



*Figure 65*. I am fully aware that students have accidents and medical needs such as diabetes or anaphylaxis and as a teacher I am part of their care understanding of duty of care (Item 11).

> Participants also highlighted the value in learning about things like ' Dealing with kids with... severe allergies or other medical problems (Participant 5, final questionnaire, 2008) and more explanation of 'medical conditions and appropriate teaching strategies and resources' (Participant 5, final questionnaire).

Item 12 investigated the level of awareness about teachers' duty of care for students, including issues relating to child welfare. Although a similar item was presented in the initial questionnaire, that item also sought perceptions about the challenges associated with mandatory reporting. As a result, these items spanning the first and final questionnaire cannot be directly compared.

At the conclusion of their B. Teach program, a substantial portion (88.50 %) of participants reported a sound awareness of what was required of them in relation to welfare issues in the classroom context. See Figure 66. Only a small portion reported that they lacked such awareness (3.80 %).

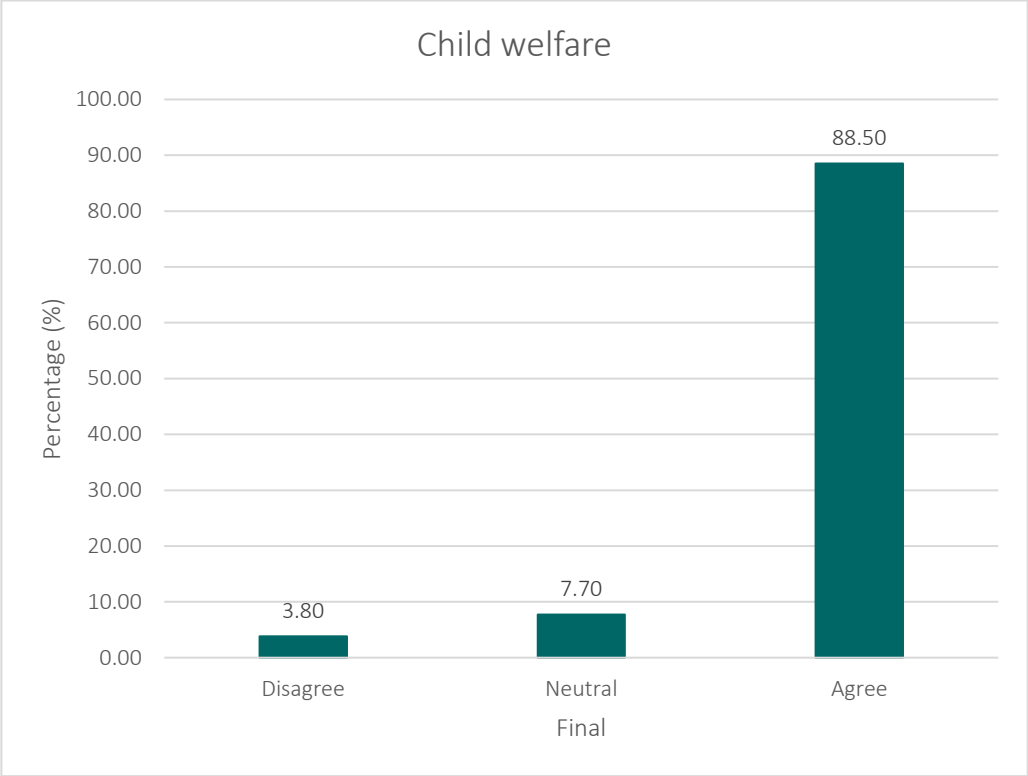



*Figure 66.* I am fully aware that I have a duty of care for my students that includes child welfare issues (Item 12).

Emma conveyed an awareness of potential issues relating to mandatory reporting, where she highlighted that children '…sent off to school in unwashed clothes and stuff…will be a challenge…as I have never really seen that…' (Emma Pre-PE, 2007). Despite this reference, her insights were limited and no participants identified or referred to specific observations or discussions with their supervising colleague teacher about welfare issues.

At the completion of the B. Teach program, the majority of pre-service teachers (69.20 %) indicated their preparedness to maintain positive relationships in the school setting and wider school community to be strong. See Figure 67. Only a small portion of the cohort reported feeling unprepared or uncertain regarding this key element of navigating the work environment.

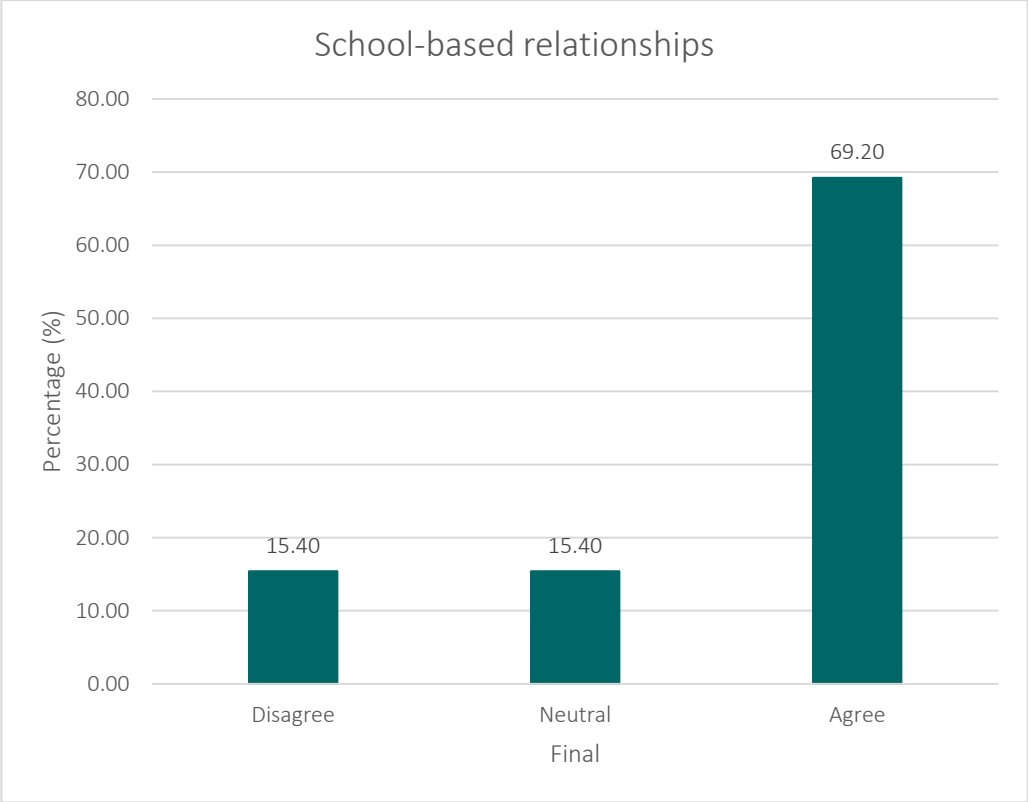



*Figure 67*. I have been well equipped with skills which will assist me in maintaining positive relationships with other staff, parents and students (Item 13).

Sarah reflected on the disparity between what she envisaged the relationship with her the placement school would be like and the reality. She was surprised by the autonomy she was afforded to create an equal relationship with staff, students and parents;

> I thought they would sort of monitor me and I'd be... on a very short leash... but I've been given a lot of freedom.
>
> (Sarah, Post-PE)

She also noted the depth of relationship and social interaction, what she called 'The social thing...', where she witnessed '...having the support of the colleagues [and] really close relationships' (Sarah, Post-PE).

Results from the initial questionnaire (Item 37) revealed that the perceived level of challenge of the first year cohort was low (16.67 %) regarding behaviour management. See Figure 68. A similar result related to managing the behaviour of students with diagnosed deficits such as ADHD or ADD. The final questionnaire revealed the majority of pre-service teachers' (46.20 %) were neutral in their response. Around one quarter of the cohort was decisive with 26.90 % agreeing that they were well-equipped while another quarter (26.90 %) disagreed.

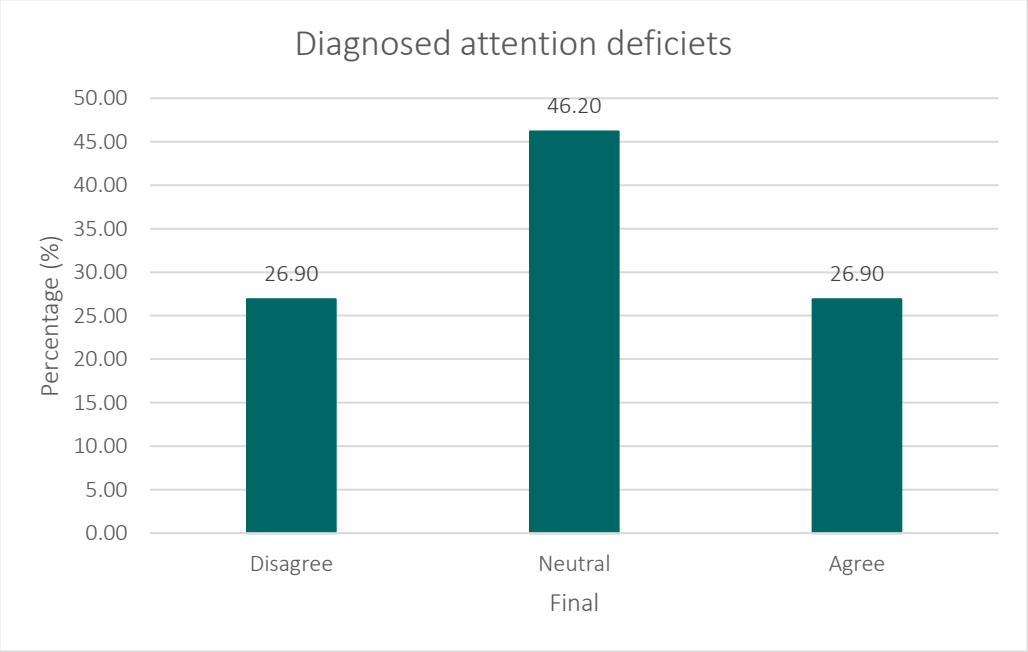



*Figure 68*. I have been well equipped with the skills to be able to manage the behaviour of my students successfully, including those with diagnosed conditions such as ADD or ADHD (Item 14).

Within the final questionnaire, eight pre-service teachers discussed that more specialised and authentic behaviour management learning would assist in preparing them for the classroom. For example, Participant 5 stated that '…A more practical approach to behaviour management [is needed] (Final questionnaire) while Participant 18 suggested that there needed to be '…More behaviour management earlier in the [program].' (Final questionnaire). Participant 11 also emphasised the need for this content but that it needed to extend beyond theoretical understandings, where they emphasised;

> BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT! (not just in the form of theory but perhaps role plays or hiring an actor to come in for a tutorial…
>
> (Participant 11, Final questionnaire)

Interviewees also expanded on their experience of behaviour management during their Professional Experience placement and found the challenges of learning in the role equally challenging, as Judy pointed out;

> [Behaviour management is] something I'm still working on…I'm finding I'm too nice…it's something, I don't want to punish, it's weird, growling is one thing.
>
> (Judy, Post-PE2)

Michael also experienced a level of challenge in relation to experiences of managing behaviours, but emphasised his appreciation for experiencing this authentic part of the role;

> Challenging [Professional Experience], there was [sic] a lot of student behaviour issues to deal with, that said, I feel it was better to go through that on prac rather than not experience it till later in a career.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE2)

Item 9 of Part B of the initial questionnaire and Item 15 of the final questionnaire sought the pre-service teachers' understanding of public perceptions and expectations. See Figure 69. A 9.37 % positive shift in agreement was observed, principally a shift from those providing a neutral response. This demonstrated that the participants had developed a clearer picture of the public perception throughout the duration of their ITE program. A Wilcoxon test calculation revealed this to be a significant difference ($p<0.05$).

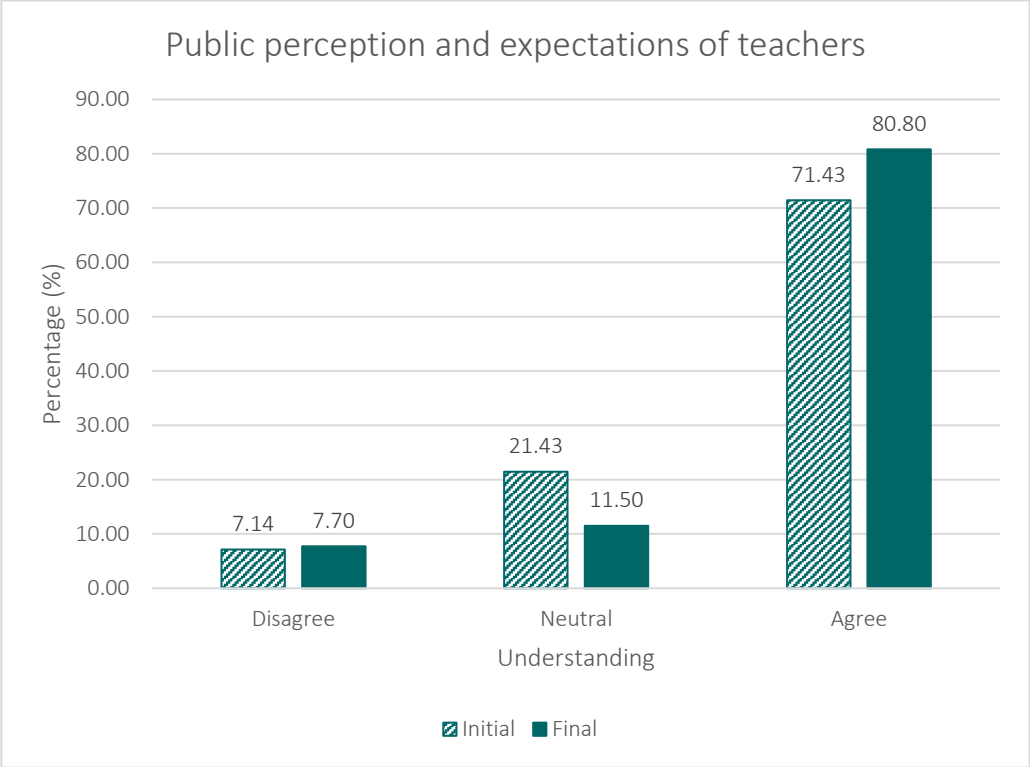



*Figure 69*. I fully understand that the general public have certain expectations regarding my professional and personal conduct as a teacher in our community (Item 15).

## 5.7 Part B: Pre-service teachers and the teaching profession

Part B of the final questionnaire sought to determine the priorities of pre-service teachers as at the conclusion of their ITE program. Three sets of four items were

presented in which participants were asked to rank responses provided from most important to least important within each group. Each question related to a key aspect of consideration regarding the profession: Professional work conditions (PWC), Family-enabling/supporting needs (FESN), Working with children (WWC) and Required competencies (RC). See Figure 70.

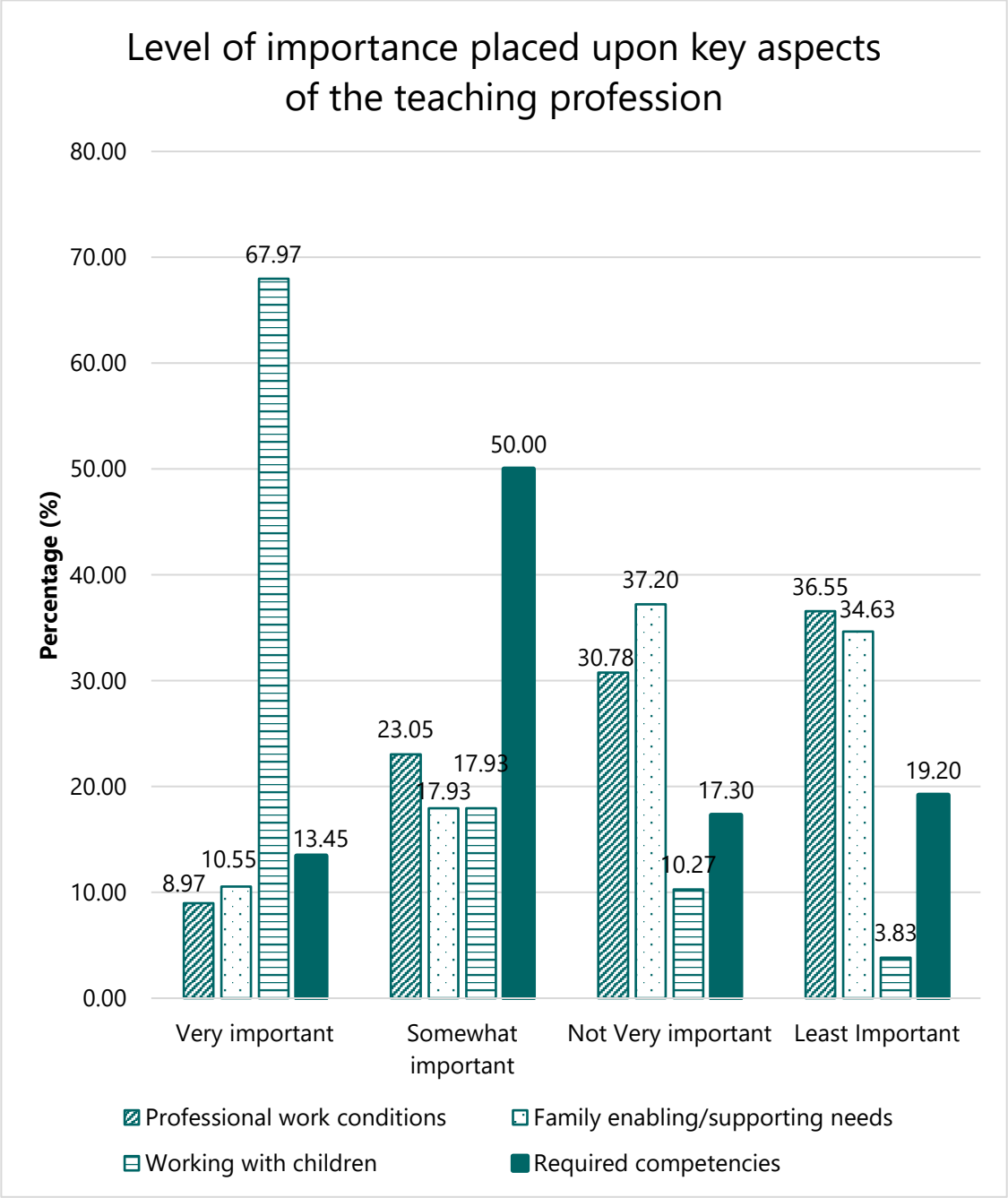



*Figure 70.* The level of importance placed upon key aspects of the teaching profession (Part B: Item 1).

The results revealed a high prioritisation of aspects related to working with children (67.97 % of 'most important'), which was to be anticipated given similar yet more pronounced data was obtained in the initial questionnaire (92.86 %). Working with children was indicated to be the largest contributing factor in the participants' decision to enter teaching.

Required competencies associated with enacting the teaching role were considered somewhat important by half of the participants (50.00 % 'somewhat important'), followed by Family enabling/supporting needs (37.20 % of 'not very important') and Professional work conditions (36.55 % 'of least important'). Pre-service teachers considered it most important to work with children and the have developed the required competencies to enact the task well.

## 5.8 Part C: Pre-service teachers' thoughts regarding the teaching profession

Items 1 and 2 of the final questionnaire were identical to Items 1 and 2 of the initial questionnaire completed by the same cohort at the commencement of their B. Teach program in February of the previous year. Item 1 asked; *What do you consider to be the three most challenging aspects of teaching?*

Key terms and ideas such as behaviour management, difficult students or colleagues, and time management, were recoded under five key categories as identified by the initial questionnaire data; behaviour management, relationships, work related tasks, personal issues and professional issues.

Using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, the comparison between the initial and final questionnaire results for this item indicated little change in the perceived and experienced challenges for the cohort. Only a small increase (2.58 %) in perceived challenge related to behaviour management was observed in the final questionnaire. As a point of interest, when specifically asked about behaviour management in Item 36 of the initial questionnaire, 16.67% of the cohort agreed that they perceived behaviour management to present a high level of challenge.

One participant, at the completion of the B. Teach program, expressed their concern over behaviour management issues they found deeply challenging relating to '… teachers being assaulted by students/swearing...' (Participant 11, Final questionnaire)

When asked about unexpected challenges in the classroom, Michael made reference to behaviour management strategies he thought might be available to him but were not permitted by the Professional Experience school;

> Having to deal with constantly disruptive students, without the option of removing them from class on a permanent basis.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE2)

Judy spoke about the difficulty of not being able to implement her own behaviour management plan in the classroom, instead of needing to enforce the plan established by her colleague teacher;

> I can try and adopt her plans but the thing is, it's not mine really and I find it hard to turn somebody else's plan because it's theirs and I feel as if they set the limits…it's hard to come into a plan like that.
>
> (Judy, Post-PE2)

Having been denied the opportunity to try her own strategies for behaviour management during Professional Experience, Judy was unsure of her ability to implement her own style of behaviour management.

> I'm not sure what I'd do with behaviour management, I haven't really thought about that.
>
> (Judy, Post-PE2)

Comparison between the initial and final questionnaires further revealed that the level of challenge presented by relationships and personal issues saw a small decline in significance within participants' responses. For most, nervousness, time management and being in front of the class became easier;

> Well, I was a bit nervous at first and I reckon that was probably a bit apparent. I've had a bit of trouble raising my voice…I'm having less problems with that [now].
>
> (Judy, Post-PE)

For Judy, although some elements such as finding her 'teacher voice' were improving, some factors continued to be difficult;

> It's the whole thing, it's like I guess you could call it stage fright. You're there, everyone is watching you, they're depending on you for something and if you stuff it up it's there…and writing on the board makes you very self-conscious!
>
> (Judy, Post-PE)

Sarah expressed a level of challenge regarding the need to keep separate her personal and professional life amid the students' desire to connect with her on a personal level and through social media;

> It's one of my biggest concerns because of my personality type… he's [colleague teacher] encouraged me to build relationships with them [students] without overstepping the situation… I had to privatise all my profiles [on social media]…I'm like, 'you can add me but I'm gonna [sic] ignore you'…they don't necessarily see me as a teacher.
>
> (Sarah, Post-PE2)

Work related tasks such as planning, engaging students, differentiation of the curriculum and pitching planned work at the correct level for students were nominated as particular areas of concern. Although only a slight increase (3.26 %) it suggested that the lived experience of 'being a teacher' on Professional Experience and managing work-related tasks proved marginally more challenging than anticipated. For example, one participant commented about the specific challenge of the impact on work/life balance;

> Teaching is a full-time job, literally, you never stop being a teacher. You always take your job home with you (good and bad).
>
> (Participant 6, Final questionnaire)

A similar response was offered about professional issues, where a lack of resources, changing curriculum, busy and fast-paced work, large class sizes and implementing government directives proved more demanding than originally thought (increase of 1.81 %). See Figure 71. Participant 10 identified '..Politics/government [as the source of] constant upheaval of curriculum and national testing standards.' (Participant 10, Final questionnaire). Participant 16 also identified '[large] class sizes that make it difficult to develop relationships with students' Final questionnaire).

In his Post-PE2 interview, Michael, a Materials, Design and Technology (MDT) pre-service teacher, highlighted '…The workshop was not the best funded or maintained [teaching space], which in turn created issues that were not necessary.' The impact of a lack of resources clearly shaped his experiences within his Professional Experience school;

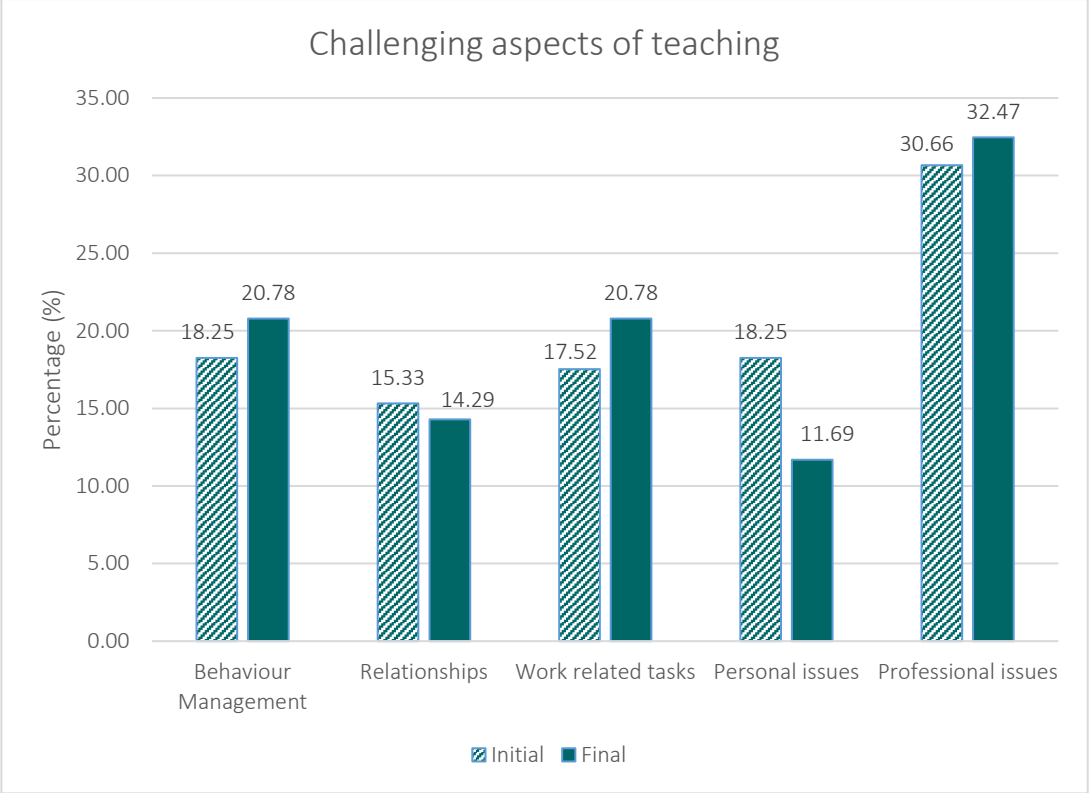



*Figure 71*. What do you consider to be the three most challenging aspects of teaching? (Part C: Item1).

Almost all categories of *Challenging aspects of teaching* were relatively consistent with initial perceptions indicating that the cohort had a realistic view of the potential challenges facing them in their new career (Figure ___). Only the category of Personal issues such as time management, being fair, feeling competent and demonstrating in front of the class, resulted in a greater decline (6.56 %) of the perceived level of challenge. An example of how these teaching challenges are felt at a personal level was shared by Participant 9;

> Being strong enough to face all the issues students bring into the classroom...being fair at all times...being a team player but suffering your own consequences.
>
> (Participant 9, Final questionnaire)

Part C Item 2 asked the question *What do you consider to be the three most rewarding aspects of teaching?*

Key terms and ideas such as holidays, creating the future, empowering students or impacting children's lives were recoded under 4 key categories: *professional rewards*, *personal rewards*, *educating students* and *nurturing students*.

These elements were identified as rewarding by the participants, with response rates remaining very stable across the duration of the B. Teach program (Initial 25.71%, Final 25.81%). Pre-service teachers recorded a 13.71% increase for *professional rewards* indicating these elements were far more rewarding or were revealed to be rewarding by the final questionnaire data collection. For Participant 2, there was one important and most rewarding aspect of teaching;

> Holidays.
> (Participant 2, Final questionnaire)

Others, however, expanded on the *professional rewards* of teaching.

> Fun job, not restricted to sitting behind a desk.
> Every day presents something new.
> (Participant 20, Final questionnaire, 2008)

> A teacher who teaches learns.
> (Participant 7, Final questionnaire, 2008)

Almost 1 in 5 participants anticipated that *Nurturing students* would be a *rewarding aspect of teaching* and this remained relatively stable from first (19.05 %) to last (22.58 %) data collection points. See Figure 72. The greatest difference between the initial and final results for *rewarding aspects of teaching* was the 17.34 % decrease regarding educating students.

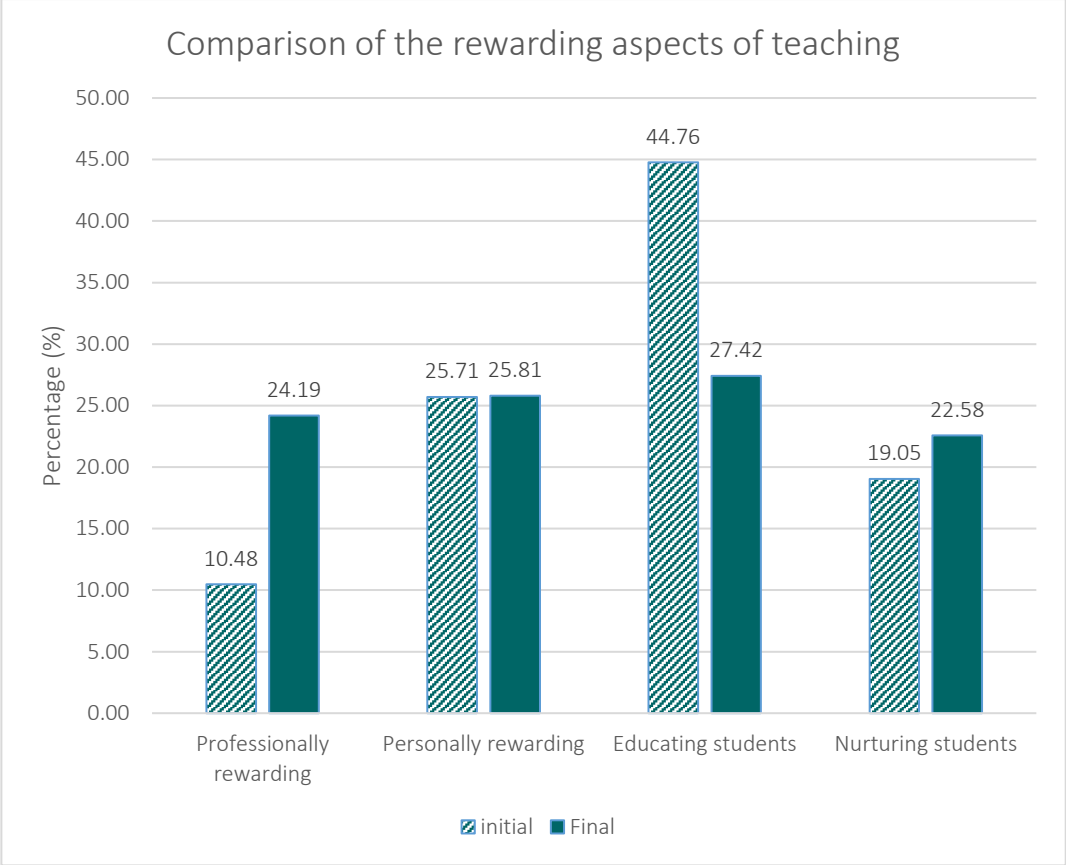



*Figure 72*. What do you consider to be the three most attractive or rewarding aspects of teaching? (Part C: Item 2).

What the participants perceived to be the core business of teaching, the *educating of students*, was not found to be in the most *rewarding aspects of teachers' work* for many of the pre-service teachers at the completion of their program. This result indicates a tension for these pre-service teachers between the work that teachers perform and the rewards they derive from it. Despite this tension, some participants were able to identify what they found to be the rewarding aspects of educating students;

> When a student finally gets something that they've been struggling with and you see that light bulb go on.
>
> (Participant 8, Final questionnaire)

> A new beginning each year, full of possibilities and the small rewards throughout the year to

> culminate in each student gaining at some level by the end of the year.
> (Participant 4, Final questionnaire)

> The students forming connections and watching them succeed.
> (Sarah, Final questionnaire)

> Being able to teach students interesting things and seeing them enjoying school.
> (Participant 22, Final questionnaire)

Items 3 and 4 of the final questionnaire did not seek comparative data but rather insights on how and in what areas the ITE process could be improved for the pre-service teacher. Participants were presented with Item 3:

*Imagine you are rewriting the Bachelor of Teaching program for the University of Tasmania. What areas of study would you expand or new topics you would include to better prepare beginning teachers such as yourself, for the reality of teaching? (You might consider areas that you feel would make you more competitive in the job market such as a first aid certificate, or topics such as conflict resolution or time management).*

Of the seven categories, university-based issues such as length and structure of the program, administration and partnership between schools and universities, stood aside from the other practice-based inclusions and accounted for 14.06% of the nominations for Part C, Item 3. See Figure 73.

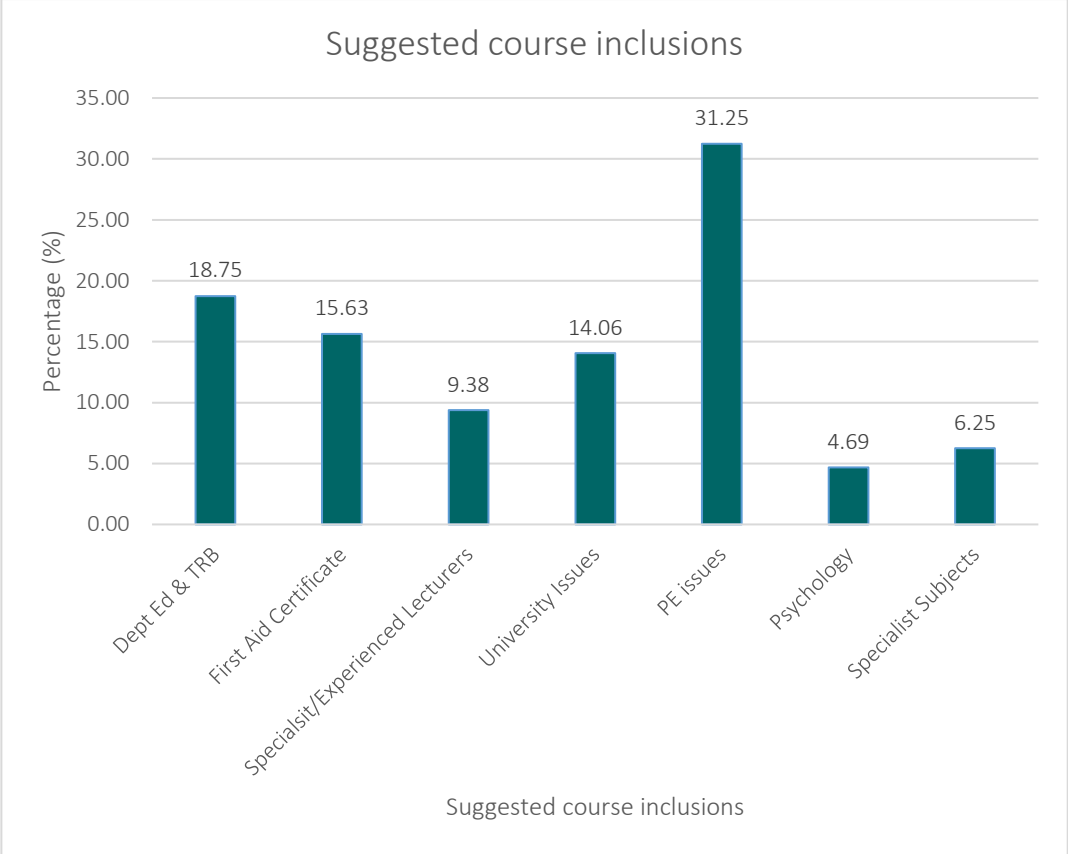



*Figure 73*. Imagine you are rewriting the B. Teach program for the University of Tasmania. What areas of study would you expand or new topics you would include to better prepare beginning teachers such as yourself for the reality of teaching? (Part C: Item 3).

Suggested program inclusions comprised: changes to program design, administrative changes, program alignment and program timeframes, related to logistical issues and communication within the Faculty of Education. One participant provided more clarity of some of these concerns, expressing that the academic demands of the program were difficult in light of the Professional Experience schedule;

> Pracs [PE] should be like the Bachelor of Education, for example, final prac, 2 weeks out then back for preparation, then back for 5 weeks. Assignments should not be…too detailed with pracs – allow time to complete them following prac. After final prac, we need [a] week to recover

> (most of us are run down and unwell) without the immediate pressure of assignments due.
> (Participant 3, Final questionnaire)

Regarding the perceived lack of partnership between the University and the Department of Education, emphasising the symbiotic relationship between one institute that prepares teachers and the other that employs them, Participant 7 offered some advice;

> Communication improvement between schools and university – general organisation.
> (Participant 7, Final questionnaire)

Embedding a 'first aid certificate' into the B. Teach program proved to be a regular suggestion from participants, with 15.63 % of the cohort including this a worthwhile inclusion. The suggestion of more exposure to specialised and experienced lecturers or teachers (9.38 %) pertained to ensuring those guiding them in their theoretical studies had recent and relevant classroom experience and were able to make strong connections between the theory and the practice of teaching. This was also raised by Participant 16 as a way to strengthen pre-service teachers' understanding and self-efficacy going into the classroom setting, as well as making them more employable;

> I think it would be useful to have more experts come in and do professional development similar to what is done in schools…. It would also enable us to understand thinking and knowledge that is commonplace in schools in our area.
> (Participant 8, Final questionnaire)

More subject specialisation units were suggested to build knowledge, skills and understanding for specific curriculum areas (6.25 %). Psychology (4.69 %) was suggested as helpful in understanding students and the way they think.

The most represented contribution to this item was that of Professional Experience (31.25 %). The majority of which suggested the inclusion of more classroom time, more exposure to students and schools and more opportunity to practise in the school setting. Some participants suggested this should replace much of the theoretical learning while others suggested returning to university during Professional Experience periods to consolidate understandings and to seek support from lecturers and peers.

As the following examples demonstrate, the participants are looking for ways to connect their theory to practice and see the inherent value in both;

> I feel I've had too much theory and not enough practical. I can't see the real-life applications of many of the topics which we have been presented.
>
> (Participant 8, Final questionnaire)

> Less theory (as this currently is the main focus).
>
> (Participant 20, Final questionnaire)

> Prac periods really consolidated the learning. A break of a week or so in the middle of prac to receive further tuition, reflection, and peer support on problems encountered may also benefit.
>
> (Participant 15, Final questionnaire)

Despite these insights, some participants failed to see the value of theoretical learning at all and felt the university had not prepared them for 'real' teaching;

> The best and most useful part is getting out on prac, but I don't think we were really prepared by the university program.
> (Participant 6, Final questionnaire)

> A lot of the things I have learned about teaching have not been learned in this [program]. I have learned many important facts about teaching by talking to people and being 'out there'.
> (Participant 9, Final questionnaire)

> I believe I have learnt very little from my theory-based units at Uni. My learning has come from my curriculum units (music) as well as my actual pracs [PE].
> (Joanne, Final questionnaire)

Part C, Item 4 of the final questionnaire allowed for any additional comment. Some participants used this space to reflect on their future careers or ITE choices (8.00 %), others (8.00 %) made suggestions for the school setting rather than the university context, presented earlier in Item 3. A suggestion of screening colleague teachers before they are allocated a pre-service teacher undertaking Professional Experience to ensure quality teaching is modelled and a supportive experience is had by pre-service teachers revealed something of the challenges experienced by Participant 6;

> Colleague teachers need to fulfil a standard before being able to become one.
> (Participant 6, Final questionnaire)

Aside from these few nominations, the remaining 84.00 % of responses to this item related to the university. See Figure 74. Some of these reflections were an expression of frustration with initial teacher education in general, and included suggesting programs be shorter so that they can just commence teaching.

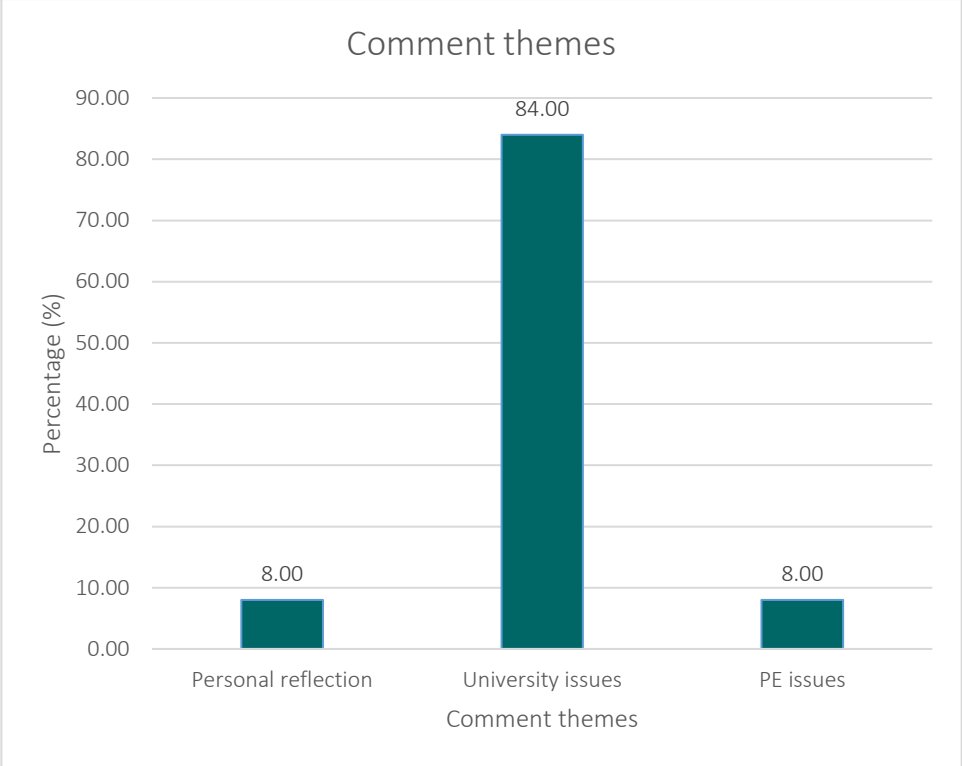



*Figure 74*. Please feel free to add other comments regarding your beginning teacher experience (Part C: Item 4).

> Make the [program] more intensive and only one year.
>
> (Participant 16, Final questionnaire)

Other comments supported those mentioned in other items such as theory to practice connections and program design modifications.

## 5.9 Summary

This chapter has compared the results of the initial and final questionnaires administered at the commencement and the conclusion of the B. Teach program for the 2007 cohort of pre-teacher participants at the University of Tasmania. It explored the results of two years' experience of theoretical study and Professional Experience and the impact it has had on the development of the participants and in doing so addressed the third research question. Data presented within this chapter indicates that a change in perception has occurred in the pre-service teachers' consideration of several key elements of the teaching profession.

Elements such as their understanding of available support structure for beginning teachers, development of curriculum interpretation, awareness of medically related duty of care and public perceptions and expectations all indicated a significant change between the two questionnaire data collection phases. Understanding of the teacher registration process was revealed to be lacking across the cohort, whereas understanding the process of obtaining character checks, prohibited person legislation and adhering to the identified code of conduct was consistently strong. Pre-service teacher understanding of the available support structures for graduate teachers, demonstrated a shift toward disagreement in the final questionnaire. This disturbing result will be expanded upon in Chapter 7 of this thesis.

As expected, with increased opportunity to practice in the classroom, pre-service teachers indicated an increase in their understanding of the required competencies of teaching, interpreting curriculum, student assessment, reporting, inclusive practices and dealing with medical emergencies. Items related to experiences they may not be encountered during Professional Experience placement such as working with gifted and talent students not only showed no increase in understanding but an emphasis on their lack of competency in such areas.

The pre-service teachers in this study emphasised, above all else, the importance of working with children. Being competent in their work and working in a profession that enabled and supported family needs were considered more important than professional work conditions. Although the initial and final beliefs reported by participants regarding the perceived challenges of the teaching profession remained relatively consistent, the perceived rewards of the profession, such as professional rewards and nurturing children increased, consistent with the value they placed on working with children. A substantial decrease in the reported level of reward related to the actual imparting of

knowledge to children was observed, highlighting the relational nature of the teaching process.

Pre-service teachers made recommendations regarding the structure and emphasis of their ITE program, suggesting inclusions of reviewing the policies and processes related to Professional Experience and the inclusion of employment based professional development and useful certifications. Additional comments by participants related primarily to university program structure and management

The following chapter elaborates on the contextual, personal and professional influences upon and reasons for changes in perceptions of the pre-service teachers experience as they prepare to enter the teaching profession.

# Chapter 6

# Research Question 4

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter draws upon data that was gathered during pre-service teachers' Professional Experience placements. The scheduling of this data collection was intentional, to provide data relating to Research Question 4:

*What contextual, personal or professional issues have contributed to changing perceptions of these pre-service teachers?*

In examining this question, the data analyses provided information regarding a range of personal and professional influences related to the experience of preparing to become a teacher. The question interrogated the personal motivations for entering the teaching profession and explored the perceptions and beliefs of the pre-service teachers as they progressed through their B. Teach program. Additionally, Research Question 4 sought the personal reflections of the pre-service teachers regarding the impact of commencing or returning to study as well as the personal responses to the perceived and experienced nature of classroom teaching in Tasmanian schools, gained through Professional Experience placement activities.

By addressing Research Question 4, the story of the growth of the pre-service teachers and their evolving professional identity emerged. This explicated the

developing understandings, perceptions and beliefs examined in the previous chapter as a result of the personal and professional influences upon their development.

In addition to issues of professional identity development, this research question examined the impact of the practical, in-school Professional Experience in relation in the preparation of the pre-service teacher for the classroom. The quality of the Professional Experience, the impact of the colleague teacher, and the perceived reward/challenge balance was investigated and related to these indicators of development.

This chapter is organised according to the sequential journey of the pre-service teacher, from early career choices, motivations for choosing teaching, and future aspirations.

## 6.2 Personal and professional influences

Analysis of the qualitative data indicated that the reasons for choosing to teach are as numerous and as varied as the participants themselves. Given the program prerequisites, this cohort are considered 'career changers'. Implicit in this title are the reasons for choosing previous career pathways, their reasons for leaving their previous careers and their motives for choosing to teach. Although some of these insights and preferences were shared in Chapter 4, they are drawn together here to underpin the pathways taken by these participants as they transitioned from pre-service teacher to beginning teacher.

The narratives of the first-year participants are of primary importance, as it is this cohort that is followed from commencement through to the completion of their program. Opportunistically, four second-year pre-service teachers were interviewed and although their contributions provide insight into the factors influencing their arrival in the B. Teach program, it is important to note that their

responses were already informed by program teachings and previous Professional Experience at the first point of data collection.

### 6.3 Reasons for choosing previous career

Analysis of the quantitative data revealed that 39 different fields were nominated by participants, which were categorised to form six discrete domains: creative arts, arts & humanities, professions, trades, sciences and the service industry. Of these domains, pre-service teachers had moved from creative arts and arts & humanities, followed by professions, trades, sciences and the service industry in descending order. The reasons for choosing these origin careers, as reported by the participants, were out of personal interest, employment opportunity, financial demands and/or circumstantial necessity.

Pre-service teachers reported that the guidance and support of former teachers, friends and family, encouraged them to follow their personal interests and talents and to seek employment in fields which allowed them to benefit financially from the activities they enjoyed. However, for Michelle, the desire to teach was ever present as a longer-term employment goal;

> [I] majored in painting…because I had a really great art teacher in College who encouraged me to go to art school and that I could, in fact, make a life out of painting…I'd always expected that I'd do post-graduate studies in that field…and get into teaching that way.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

Judy's passion for writing and English, despite early considerations of teaching, was most dominant in her career plans, particularly in relation to an avenue of income;

> What I want to be was a writer, but that doesn't make much money and a lot of teachers are actually writing and it's something you can do together.

(Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

Regardless of her clear intentions, Judy envisioned first, writing for employment and then teaching. Her timeline changed and back-to-back degrees were undertaken to allow her to enter the classroom after her period of study, sooner than she had expected.

> I wasn't going to go straight out [of one degree] and then straight in [to an education degree] which I actually did, but I knew I was going to eventually do it.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

Simon's interest was always to complete a trade and to enter the workforce as a tradesman (fitter and turner), as he said, 'I guess I knew I wanted to do a trade' (Pre-PE, First-year). However, his career pathway was varied, disrupted and dependent on opportunity. The choice to undertake additional programs possibly indicated a continuation of Simon's search for satisfaction and stability in his work life.

> I finished my apprenticeship, I…worked around it…rather than directly in it. I did a night course in diesel mechanics…I played around in mining and then I went farming…I plodded along from job to job a lot of the time. I never actually took any full-time jobs.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Simon, having completed programs in fitting and turning and diesel mechanics already, still considered teaching as a final destination. He declared that the decision to enter a trade was based on opportunity. His desire to work with his hands led him to consider a trade apprenticeship as an appropriate means to stimulating work.

> I was always interested in hands on, the opportunity was there but even when I did my apprenticeship it was still in

> the back of my mind that down the track after a couple of years I might look at teaching.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma was uncertain as to her future direction and undertook programs that piqued her interest at the time.

> I actually went into a Tourism Management Degree first…I had no idea what I wanted to do so I just tried a few different things until I found something that fit.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Participants such as Emma found that her preferred employment as an accountant sustained her interest for over a decade before she considered a change of direction. Nonetheless, teaching was evident in her thinking early in her career choices.

> A Bachelor of Commerce …was my first choice and then Bachelor of Education was my second choice…when I got into the accounting, I sort of went with that road, fell into a job straight away. I did enjoy it at that time.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Despite having explained her strong desire to be an accountant, Emma revealed more about her early decision-making process and how this stemmed from a time sensitive pressure to make a choice.

> I always had aspirations to be an architect…you seem to have all this pressure on you to pick something…I was always good at maths at school so I sort of fell into the accounting.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

The need to 'pick something' as formal schooling concludes is aimed at providing the student with an employment pathway, the goal of which, is to find

and maintain a financially sustaining income.

William was adamant that financial reward was not a high priority, especially compared to the level of stimulation the job provides, as he explained;

> Finances don't usually make my decisions for me. I'm the sort of person who every two or three years tends to get really bored with what he's doing anyway and just turns around and does something else.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Despite his conceited approach to employment, he also made a number of statements in recognition of the importance of gainful employment;

> Well, a person needs to work of course and if I can make a living doing something that...stimulates me and feeds me at the same time...it just adds…I tend to be more of the mind that you go after what you want and…you make a living along the way anyway.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

For others, though, financial remuneration was a major consideration for choosing their previous career. So much so for Simon, it delayed his enrolment into teaching;

> I actually applied to come here and then I looked at it and I thought no I have a good job… no I'll give it a miss for a year or two and then a year rolls into two, three, four, five.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michael, a second-year participant, entered teaching from a trade background to become an MDT teacher. Although he enjoyed his trade, he, like Simon, envisaged eventually teaching in a school setting at some time in the future;

> I have a trade background, I sort of never envisioned doing a trade for the rest of my life and I did see myself sometime in the future switching over to teaching.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE, Second-year)

Nigel's love of working with people was emphasised in his questionnaire and his interview responses. This desire to engage and interact with people and children was a contributing factor in him initially entering psychology;

> I am very much a people person and I love kids, very much…my previous degree is psychology which I did because I just…love people, I love interacting.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE, Second-year)

## 6.4 Reasons for leaving the previous career

### 6.4.1 Seeking something new

The decision to leave a previous career and enter full-time ITE study was not made lightly by the participants. For all participants, there was a point at which the decision to leave was either a 'push' out of their previous career or a 'pull' into teaching. For those leaving their previous careers, the decision was made on the grounds of work conditions or an inability to continue to fulfil the work requirements and therefore a need to re-train in a new field. Others found a lack of progression in their careers or a lack of stimulation created the motivation to leave. For some, a change in personal circumstances proved to be the catalyst for change.

Simon described how his wife's acquired brain injury changed his family circumstances and his ability to continue to fulfil the demands of full-time employment. He explained that his entry into ITE study was about finding stimulation on a level he could manage;

> I've had 12 years at home looking after the family…I just could not think about doing anything full-time or I couldn't commit to anything.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Simon's absence from the workforce enabled him to consider re-training as he was approaching re-entering the workforce for the first time in over a decade.

> I thought…it's time for me to look at something for myself…and teaching had always been in the back of my mind…I wasn't sure how I'd go or how it would be, but I knew to get back in the workforce, I probably would have to do some re-training.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Prior to enrolling in the B. Teach program, Emma reflected on her now changed personal circumstances had created the circumstances to review the level of stimulation she received from her employment. Previously, accounting was her preferred pathway but now the additional needs of providing for her children and moving forward as a single parent called for her to consider teaching as a new career, as she alluded to here;

> There's probably several different factors [as to why I left accounting to become a teacher], firstly being a single mum…when I first came to Uni, before I did my first degree, it was something that I wanted to do but I went with the accounting…got into a job and so eleven years have passed, and I'm still there.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma's comment 'I'm still there' suggested a lack of satisfaction or an unrealised intention to progress professionally. She connected this dissatisfaction to her changing personal circumstances that had driven a change in focus;

> It just feels like the right time…I can't see myself, because my children are so little…ever going back to it [accounting] full time…accounting's not what I want to do as a full-time career anymore and teaching, yeah, it just feels right.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

For Sarah, although she too followed her early career passion initially, she later discovered it did not meet her personal interests and so chose a different direction which led her directly into the B. Teach program;

> I did my Bachelor of Arts, starting off with an introduction to law and after the first year decided it was not for me…I just completed it with an English Major.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie's decision to leave her previous career was influenced by a lack of fulfilment of the requirements of the role. Although she stated that it was a 'good job', a lack of progression and intrinsic reward led to her looking for stimulation elsewhere;

> I've been working in a big corporation for the last few years. That was my first full-time position. It was a really good job but… not something that I found very rewarding. It was a job that really took over my life…I was going through all this…stress and trying really hard in the job and not getting a lot of satisfaction back… [I wondered] what difference am I really making?
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

A desire to remain living and working in Tasmania also influenced Sophie's decision to leave her corporate position. The weighing-up the costs associated with relocation and limited job satisfaction led to a change in direction;

> In my job…I had to move to Sydney if I wanted to progress. [I] don't want to move out of Tasmania. Well, for that job where it's just not very satisfying.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

Kim's life circumstances changed suddenly when she was involved in a serious car accident. Her background in drama and English led to new career opportunities through rehabilitation, but proved too demanding. Kim then found herself again seeking a new career pathway;

> I was rehabilitated back into the workforce and went to [a local radio station] and was a copywriter…and only survived a year…it was rather stressful...but discovered I actually quite enjoyed writing and could write, so then I concentrated on writing, not that there was a lot a money in that but just an expressive thing, and to see whether or not I could do it.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

### 6.4.2 Working with children

For some participants, previous life experiences of working with children had sparked ideas of becoming a teacher and led to exploring a career in education.

Joanne became involved in the Girl Guide movement during her time studying an undergraduate music degree. Working closely with children and deriving joy from the experience confirmed her choice to teach in the future. She saw this experience as a 'trial' to determine if working with children was for her, as she explained;

> I just love working with kids and when I was doing my music degree I got actively involved in [Girl Guides], kind of as a test to see, "Do I like working with kids?" I have a blast with them and so I think that's something that's helped me and the fact that I do like working with children

> and I love music it just seems the natural place to go, is to teach.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sarah shared a similar story of her previous experience in summer camps, which motivated her to look closely at the education pathway;

> I'd been doing volunteer work at children's camps for years, I decided teaching was a logical step so I applied for the B. Teach [program]…At first, it was daunting as heck…it was good…it's just good fun.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie too enjoyed the experience of working with children in a dance production and found the process very rewarding and worthy of consideration as a career; as she explained;

> Initially I started…just helping out with a little bit of dance work…but in the end I was running every session that we did. I'd go from work to school and get to have fun…the moments when students would see the overall results and everyone would be really excited…it was a great experience.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

### 6.4.3 Teaching and learning

Although some participants shared their rewarding experiences of working with children, others noted the rewarding aspects of the teaching and learning experience. Joanne stated that she had confidence in her developing skills through previous experiences of both working with children and the teaching role itself;

> I'm feeling fairly confident because I have some previous experience as a teacher, it's not in a classroom situation but I guess I feel comfortable with kids.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma discussed her rewarding experience of teaching a new software program to her colleagues at work.

> I suppose it's similar to a classroom situation where you've got so many different knowledge levels…I like the one-on-one with people…it feels good to me to have got them [colleagues] to that point where they can [use a new program].
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Although the experience of sharing knowledge with her colleagues was not the only factor in her decision to enrol in the B. Teach program, it affirmed Emma's choice to pursue teaching;

> It probably didn't push me into it [teaching] but it sort of confirmed my decision I guess…I feel like I can do it if I want to do…I find that [helping others] very rewarding…it's probably confirmed my desire to go into teaching.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

William derived a sense of reward through a more personal and professional development aspect;

> Rather than actually wanting to teach people, it was more about wanting to learn about learning …more for me than anything.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Despite claiming his interest in teaching was exclusively for his own learning, William also shared a sense of intrinsic reward he gained from sharing his knowledge with others;

> I have had quite a few learning experiences…working as a tour guide. I was always giving little lectures on the little fungi we'd see, [we would] stop the bus and go out and…have a closer look at the road kill or something (laugh).
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

In summary, when William was asked how those experiences contributed to him considering teaching, he noted a cumulative effect;

> It's really just a bunch of learning and teaching experiences that have…just happened over the years, I suppose…and just dealing with people in general and that makes you think about it [teaching].
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Like William, Sophie described how her previous role often gave her the opportunities to teach others. It was this 'taste' of the teaching experience that provided Sophie with a reason to choose teaching;

> Even in my current role, I've ended up doing a lot of training of other people.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

After completing his undergraduate degree in psychology, Nigel chose other career options such as a management role in a large supermarket chain and worked as an accountant, neither of which he found fulfilling. He identified this lack of fulfilment as pulling him toward teaching;

> When I finished my psych[ology] degree I went and worked as a manager for Woollies [large supermarket chain] and realised it wasn't very fulfilling, so I went and worked as an accountant and realised there were no people. I couldn't handle staring in front of a computer.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE, Second-year)

After 20 years in the hairdressing industry, Sue felt she needed a change. Although she was a confident and competent practitioner, she no longer felt a passion for her work.

> [I have spent] half of my career life [hairdressing] and I just am sick of it. I've done what I can do. I'm a good hairdresser and I take pride in my work but I just want another challenge in life I suppose.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE, Second-year)

Sue's need for change was expressed by all of the participants and there was a point at which unrest and a search for something new began to manifest in their thinking. Other work options were often explored beforehand, and teaching emerged as a viable and potentially stimulating profession. Forfeiting established careers or secure jobs to return to study and embark on a new and unknown profession, was a well-considered decision for all of the participants.

## 6.5 Reasons for choosing teaching

Not all participants were 'pushed' from their previous careers. Many were 'pulled' or 'called' to teaching. A long-held desire to teach, the intrinsic reward of educating others or contributing to the wider community, influenced by both internal and external factors led to the decision to enrol in the B. Teach program for the majority of the pre-service teachers in this study.

### 6.5.1 A long-held desire to teach

Many participants describe their long-held desire to be a teacher, notwithstanding initially taking alternative pathways. When they returned to the field of education they were sure in their belief that they are embarking on the career they were meant to have, as Kim and Joanne highlight below;

> When I was really, really, really little, I said I wanted to be an actor, a teacher, a sketcher, a singer, and something else I can't remember. Teaching was probably still in the back of my mind.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

> [I] think I've always wanted to be a teacher…I've always found it quite natural to want to help people and…explain to them and get them to understand…that's probably…what's led me to teaching.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Joanne, through her explanation of her ideas and aspirations of teaching, revealed some thoughts and images she held regarding herself in the teaching role. She explained how her image of herself enacting the teaching role was rudimentary and as her teaching and learning developed in the initial weeks of her program, that image was becoming more inclusive of other factors;

> [I] don't think I even thought about it at the time [of enrolling in the B. Teach program], I just sort of imagined myself in front of a class, that was all I held at that stage. I think it's now that I've started my degree I realise there's all the other aspects of teaching that you don't think about besides "I'm Miss [name]" and you teach the class kind of thing…there's been lots of things, lots of elements of teaching opened to me since I've started this degree.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michelle too found that teaching was a long-held desire. The choice to act upon it at this point in time was determined by the prospect of employment;

> [I] chose to do the Bachelor of Teaching program instead because…all through my primary school years and my high school years, I've always wanted to be a teacher.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

Simon assessed the needs of his family against his long-held desire to teach. The timing seemed right to realise this career choice;

> Family needs pushed me into this [program] in a way but it was always in the back of my mind that if the opportunity came I probably wouldn't mind doing it.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

So too, Sophie took the timing of her decision into account and made the commitment to become a teacher. She actively chose to commence her program during semester one intake to maximise her chance of success, utilising the support of her peers and not being out of alignment with units within the program;

> When I was younger I always wanted to…[be] a teacher…[I] didn't follow that path initially, so I've been toying with going back for about a year. All of last year I talked about it and looked at coming in half way through last year and then thought, no, no I think I will try and do it properly like with a whole group of people.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

In contrast to Sophie's careful planning and patient wait to enter her program, William's decision was spur of the moment. His interest in learning, for his own mental stimulation, led to a quick decision to enrol in the B. Teach program;

> It's more of an unconscious decision I suppose…It was a kind of spur of the moment decision, I only decided at the end of last year.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

### 6.5.2 Contributing to the wider community

What was common between many of the participants was the deep desire to contribute to the wider community and feel a sense of purpose in their work. They expressed a desire to feel that what they did mattered beyond themselves and gave something of substance to others and society, as Michelle emphasised;

> I'd like to be seen as a mentor for kids and a role model…embody things like integrity and honesty, and directness…being someone that they [children] look up to …to aspire to be those things as well…[As] a teacher, I imagined myself to be someone that kids trusted and can come to outside of class as well…you do have [a]…responsibility to teach them sort of [sic] moral issues…things like that.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie acknowledged that although she had a successful career that would provide for her family, she wanted to ensure she would be proud of her contribution to the lives of others;

> I could see myself doing [my previous role] in forty years and just looking back and feeling quite… disappointed I suppose with what I have done… I really loved school (laugh), [I] have a lot of respect for a lot of the teachers that were really good, so I think that I would like to be able to do that.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

Kim, as a mature age pre-service teacher with children of her own and a range of life experiences, felt she was in a strong position to confidently contribute to the lives of young people, despite her initial nervousness in the role of teacher;

> I am still a beginner and that's what the fear was. What would I know about teaching them? When I'm only just starting…but the breadth of experience I have aside from just these first couple of months at university, adds weight.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

William also felt there was a greater purpose of conributing to the lives of young people;

> Passing on the encouragement to the curious…I want to encourage people, well kids, to get past that [misinformation] and look at what's in front of them and logically put the information together…that would be good…to make sense rather than to just accept what someone else puts in front of them.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

William had always discussed his self-interest in choosing to teach and how the process of learning would stimulate his own mind, but as he explored his motivations further, he realised his desire to contribute to the wider community was more important than previously thought;

> My initial motivation was pure self-interest, to learn more about learning…and the more I get into what I am doing here [at University]…the more I'm actually feeling motivated…inspired to give it to others.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Simon felt that there was a need in society for those with practical hands-on skills to share them with future generations and that those in a position to teach should ensure they have acquired that experience. He also felt a sense of obligation as a skilled tradesman, to ensure society did not lose traditional hands-

on skills. Simon viewed his mature age status and knowledge of traditional techniques as an asset in the school setting, as he outlined;

> I think there's always an opening for teachers in that area [MDT and Design Technology], but I think before a teacher can do any teaching…they need their life skills and hands-on experience. Those who had been in the workforce and went into teaching later I think were better teachers…I think it's the skills we're losing, hands-on skills, so that's probably my priority to be able to pass on some of those skills…and whilst I'm probably older, I'm going in fresh whereas…teachers my age are looking at retiring.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

### 6.5.3 Intrinsic reward

Beyond the desire to contribute to the wider community, Emma gave consideration to the importance of feeling satisfied and intrinsically rewarded by her work;

> It is thankless [teaching]…I guess in some respects, but it's still rewarding…in my current career…I don't have any challenges anymore. I've been working in the same job for…eleven years…and to me, that's thankless, very. It's not rewarding…whereas with teaching… each year you get a new lot of kids, they're all…hopefully, bubbling with enthusiasm and…you get to guide them for an entire year in different aspects…and as far as challenging goes…I thrive on a challenge…I'm not getting that from my current job…it's just tedious.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

This need for a sense of stimulation and challenge was intrinsically rewarding for Emma and Joanne cited a similar need through self-improvement;

> I like that side of the teaching career because you are always trying to improve yourself and reflecting…"Am I doing the best job or could I do it better?"
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

William, who highly valued the sharing of knowledge, noted that through his work as a tour guide, the thirst for knowledge demonstrated by his visitors was particularly exciting and intrinsically rewarding;

> Some of them [visitors] would just line up and start asking questions and I would just get a real thrill then…when they were interested enough to start asking questions, I would just start feeling rather high.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Simon was also reflective about the contribution he could make to students and the thought of this was very rewarding;

> I hope they [students] say "well that teacher taught me something, Mr Simon helped me with this and I remember how to do that"…whether it be in their trade or just something they're doing at home…I would hope that they are doing something hands-on, it will be all worth something.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie's need to contribute to the lives of others was where she felt her sense of reward would emerge. Her former high paying career no longer provided her with a sense of purpose or reward. She hoped for a greater sense of contribution through teaching;

> In life, money's money, the more you have, the more you spend. Personally for me with teaching I feel reward. I have always felt reward…personal satisfaction is what I think most about teaching…I hope that's what I think about teaching…in the bigger scheme of my actual life is that, you know when I'm old, and if I can do this and I do enjoy it and I am successful, I will look back on it and feel like I've made a difference.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

### 6.5.4 Internal /External influences

Pre-service teachers openly shared their need for intrinsic reward and that they felt that teaching may be the conduit for achieving this in their work life. Internal influences such as lifestyle, family needs, intrinsic rewards and contribution to the wider community have already been explored as reasons for choosing to teach. External influences such as friends, family and former teachers also played a significant role in the choices of the participants.

After completing an Arts degree with an English major, Sarah felt as though her employment options were limited. Discussion with her former Grade 7 teacher encouraged her to consider entering the classroom;

> Teaching isn't sort of, just a back-up choice. It's a very good choice. I mean being a teacher is a hugely important role…teachers influence so many people on so many different levels… My former teacher helped me decide to do it, because I really wanted to and not because I didn't feel like I had another option but just sort of tap into the skills I already had and the feelings about the area that I already had, just make a decision, just go for it.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Lifestyle was also important for Michelle. Her passion for art and her desire to practice as an artist underpinned her choice to enter teaching. She believed the lifestyle would not only allow her the time to paint but this in itself would strengthen her teaching practice, experience and credibility as an art teacher. Michelle reported that her thinking was shaped externally through the modelling by a former influential teacher;

> [I] believe that there's no point me being an art teacher if I don't continue my own art. So even if it [teaching] does get too time-consuming…I will also be able to structure

> some time outside for me to paint…it was modelled for me by my art teacher, he was a practising artist too.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

For Simon, who was a carer and parent within his family, the transition of his youngest son to high school signalled an opportunity for him to prioritise his own needs and return to study and the workforce. The influence of a perceived family-friendly lifestyle was important;

> The youngest is 12 now…so I guess coming back to do this B. Teach program, it was family lifestyle. I'm still limited with him [my son] as far as time…the lifestyle around school hours was important.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma also cited family needs as an important motivator in her choice to enter teaching. Her need to care and provide for her children saw her gravitate towards the lifestyle that teaching could offer;

> After having children, it just seemed to be probably the better career choice to fit in with family and that sort of thing…I'm at a point where I just need a new challenge and…something that fits in with my family life and I think teaching will do that a lot better than my current career.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

### 6.5.5 Family influence

Participants reflected on their family experiences and the importance of children in their lives and connected to their interest in teaching. For example, Sarah shared her family dynamic and the nurturance for children she developed;

> I am a big sister, I have two siblings. So my entire life I've looked after people and looked after kids…all my life, it's very important to me.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Judy also noted her attuned observations and her realistic view of children's behaviour, demonstrating her consideration of the nature of children based on her family experience;

> Well, I've got young cousins. I know what kids are like. They can be very nice and they can also very cruel.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

Family needs, as an internal influence were central to the thinking for many of the participants; however, the support and encouragement of family members was particularly important too, as Joanne highlighted;

> My biggest influence in my whole life is definitely my mum and she's a teacher. Something that had a big influence on me [was]…seeing what she did as a teacher. I liked what she did with her life and how she was doing it, so I thought it must be a pretty good profession.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Joanne's appreciation of her mother's career focus as a science teacher influenced her own passion and built around her interests in music;

> She [mum] was a science teacher, no-one in my family is musical at all…I used to go and watch her teach and I actually kind of grew up under her desk at college so I kind of feel really comfortable in schools…it was probably something that's helped me in wanting to be a teacher.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Joanne's own family culture regarding education and the positive teaching and learning experiences with her mother shaped the way she viewed teachers work and the impact they had on the student and their desire to learn;

> My parents were really supportive and they gave me every opportunity that they could…[it] me made me keep going and want to challenge myself and get a little bit further…we all respected the education system…she [mum] also would help us if we were stuck with something, she would help us do our assignments and that kind of thing…[it was] very relaxed…it was definitely valued and encouraged but it wasn't forced upon us…we were just made to realise the importance of it.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma realised the importance of developing a learning culture for her own children that valued education and challenged her to achieve personal goals in education;

> [Observing the impact of undertaking higher education] sort of became a priority I guess, I want to do it…I'm determined to get myself where I want to be…more so for my children.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Kim claimed that she had often considered teaching. She reported that others had made positive observations about her ability to communicate with and develop understanding of those with whom she worked. Her own experience of her university lecturer father, who she identified as a teacher, was at odds with her image of teachers and the role they play in the lives of young learners. She was deterred from teaching for some time by the modelling of her father.

> Lots of people had suggested …there would be value in me being a teacher…I'd probably shied away from it for a long time [be]cause my dad was a university lecturer and he scared me off of teachers. He would get easily

> frustrated by questions from us as kids…I didn't want to be that…I didn't have an appreciation for study and learning. My father was a bad influence [for teaching]…when I took essays and stuff to him to have a look at before I handed them in, he would be so negative and…gruff…that put a negative spin on trying.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

Although Kim acknowledged that the family culture was to value education, she noted that a lack of genuine interest in her learning and low expectations of her learning outcomes allowed her to become disengaged;

> Education was important. We had to keep studying and get those pieces of paper, but there was no expectation that would actually get really good marks… So if you passed, and didn't get in trouble off [sic] the teachers, that was good enough…they never actually intervened and bothered to take any interest in what we were doing to find out, to encourage.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

In contrast, Michelle's experience focused on developing a love of learning and the need to create an opportunity and a future career path for herself;

> I come from a single parent family…education was very important, but it was important in that it should be fun…you should do the things that you love doing and if there are things that you don't like doing…I [was] always encouraged to get an understanding of them.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sarah discussed the role of having teachers in her family but reiterated that family members were encouraged to make career choices that suited them rather than follow in anyone's footsteps;

> [I] have a couple of teachers in my family but I'm not particularly close to them. My mum was a tutor at university as well…and she really enjoyed it…I suppose my family does influence me in some certain ways but I've always been taught that I need to make decisions for myself…we've all been raised to be very independent with the choices we make.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

Even though independent decision-making was encouraged, Sarah observed both of her parents undertaking higher education at a mature age and saw the value in improving oneself through education to achieve personal goals;

> My mum and my dad both went back [to higher education], they've done their degrees, so education has a very big importance in my family…I'm still in Uni after so many years, is not a bad thing in my family…they're proud of me for continuing on [in my] education and just my desire to learn whatever it is that I want to learn. It's definitely a good thing.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Simon, one of eight children in a farming family, felt the pressure to work alongside his father when not at school. Higher education served little purpose on the farm, however, when Simon started high school, his father moved the family to be closer to facilities so that the children could avoid the demands of a long commute. Although not openly or actively pushed, the action of his father to uproot a farming family, demonstrated to Simon the value of education his parents held;

> We [were] always expected to learn…I started Grade 7 at an area school and dad was sort of weighing up things and he moved us to town so we could all get through high school rather than have to bus to an area school…it probably did influence me…it was important…I would say a family influence.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie's older siblings provided an academic challenge and interest in learning content beyond her years that was supported by her parents;

> They [my parents] did a lot from what I can remember…I had an older brother, so often I would try and do the work that he was doing…and that they didn't discourage me in doing that, even though he was two years above me.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

Beyond family and friends, others made comments to participants about their suitability as teachers. Sophie and Emma recalled simple comments by others that kept them thinking about teaching;

> Again people used to say to me "oh, you would be a really good teacher"…not necessarily of primary or high school, but just in general.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

> Teaching wasn't…anything that I really saw myself doing but…a few times people said to me "You know, you'd probably made a good teacher"…I suppose that's why it was sort of my second choice when I applied to Uni [university] the first time…it's something that sort of come about more so later on, you know in the last probably five years.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Kim's realisation came in the form of a television program about teaching that tapped into her long-held ideas about her suitability for the profession;

> I'd had lots of people suggest teaching in the past…and I'd always said no, no, no, no, no...and [one night I]…put [my baby] to bed and decided just to veg out for half an hour…[and] watch 'Teachers'…[a] BBC drama-comedy and one of the main characters in that [show] had her own, sort of epiphany of realising she wanted to have a baby and one of the conflicts that came up for her was where that would sit with her career and interruption it would

> cause and I had my own epiphany at the end of the show and thought well, I've had my babies so I could be a teacher now - that was it!
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

The role of the family in the development of a culture that appreciates teachers' work and the value of education was a common thread between the participants. So too was the influence of former teachers. Some participants shared stories of an important role model in their education, a valued teacher that developed a relationship that encouraged and inspired the participants to see teaching as important, valuable and a worthwhile pursuit. Other participants shared the opposite, having had teachers that did not connect on a personal level or impact the students' lives in a positive way.

### 6.5.6 Positive and negative experiences of teaching and teachers

Negative experiences related to teachers and teaching also informed participants' understandings of the role. For example, Kim's observation of her father's interest in only in high academic achievement and other problematic teachers led to her disengagement with her own learning. It also deterred her from initially considering teaching as a career option;

> I think it's really important to be interested and care about the students on a personal level…I've had a few bad teachers in the past that you know we were just a number to them pretty much, so I kind of try and have an active interest in them [students].
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

Joanne described how she felt it was important to connect on a personal level and to build authentic relationships with students. A particular incident remained in Joanne's mind, where a teacher demanded she ran the cross-country course, despite her explanation of being injured. After the race, Joanne was hospitalised. It highlighted to her the importance of understanding and

accommodating children as people. From this negative experience, she was able to identify the qualities of 'good teachers', qualities she would aspire to embody;

> This particular one [teacher] didn't care…he just wanted us to do what we were supposed to do…a good quality for a teacher is one that can…can adjust the program or what they're doing to suit the needs of the students and you know if they've had something happen at home, something bad they will…take that into account.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Although this incident in itself wasn't a deciding factor in choosing to teach, she had a number of positive experiences that highlighted the contrast between teachers and highlighted these motivations for her to become a teacher;

> I find it really natural to teach. I've had some very good teachers as well which have influenced me and made me want to be like them, so my music teachers at school are really great…that was a big motivator.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Like Kim and Joanne, Judy experienced some negative teaching experiences that emphasised to her the kind of teacher she did not want to be like, but she acknowledged the role 'good teachers' have played in her own education;

> I've had some very good teachers…even though not all the experiences were positive, that's…something that I'd love to show, to carry on, it's probably a cliché…if you've [had] good teachers you can become a teacher…[but] it's something…I was naturally attracted to really.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma's experiences were not predominantly inspired by a particular teacher but were an accumulation of positive experiences throughout her education. However, the more Emma thought about her schooling, she was able to recall a significant teacher and was able to identify what made her special;

> I didn't have any particular teacher that inspired me to become a teacher…[in high school]. I don't feel that I built any great relationships with any one given teacher, but that's not to say that I didn't have any great teachers, because I did…but…they didn't really inspire me in any particular direction…I'd probably look at my ideal teacher as…my Year 5 teacher…she was understanding, she was always available to talk…I think she built a relationship with the entire class and made everybody in the class feel important and special…she's who I think about...I guess when I answered that I didn't have a teacher that inspired me…she did in one way or in a lot of ways…I guess she crops up in my mind all the time that that's how I want to be with my class…she's who I think about.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sarah was very aware of the sorts of relationships and personalities she was able to connect with at school. She noted that she responded best to calm, supportive adults in her school life. Those teachers that made an effort to connect with her became important influences in her education;

> If I liked and respected a teacher, I listened a lot more and I was more willing to participate in activities in class…teachers I didn't like, I…sort of switched off in class and didn't pay attention…In Prep my teacher…made the extra effort to go to every students' house and have morning tea with them and their family…it's a tiny little thing, I don't remember a thing of what was said or what we did but I know that she came and…we all liked her just that little bit more.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sarah's early positive experiences continued throughout her school life to the end of Grade 12, including teachers she met through a student exchange experience she undertook in Grade 7. Sarah described two sets of positive influences on her decision to become a teacher. Furthermore, she spoke about combining the best characteristics of two of her teachers. Firstly, the experience of an influential teacher during time spent away from home left an indelible mark;

> I had a Grade 7 teacher who was really, really lovely to me. I was in another country and they just sort of looked after me while I was over there…a sort of mentor I suppose you'd call him and his passion for his job and for the children that he looked after was a really…big part of me deciding to come into the Bachelor of Teaching at this point in my life.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Secondly, a pair of Secondary teachers extended this through high expectations that communicated an intention of care for her;

> A couple of my English teachers in Grade 11 and 12, they were just brilliant, one was a little tougher than the other…while she wasn't the warmest person, she was an excellent teacher and so she sort of inspired me to be a good teacher, to have passion for my subject…my other English teacher was really warm, really friendly, first name basis with all her students…she was just really lovely…so the two of them are the two sides to teaching I'd really like to…emulate in my own style.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Like Sarah, Michelle credited her Grade 11 and 12 teachers as having modelled a way of being that impacted her powerfully as a student, but also influenced her as an adult to consider teaching;

> I want to become a college teacher…I just loved my teachers so much and they helped me so much…[they] just helped me grow a really definite perspective on the world

> and be able to express my ideas… it's just so valuable, I don't want anyone to miss out on that…so because I've had that experience I feel like I've got…almost a responsibility and pass it onto another generation of kids...I think it came from this, I respected teachers so much and I thought that they were so wise and all-knowing and I wanted to be like them.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

The teacher-student relationship experienced by participants, when they themselves were students, was a recurring theme between the participants. The ability of the teachers to build and foster a positive relationship with participants determined if they were a 'good' teacher or a 'bad' teacher.

Simon recalled his experience of the contrasting approaches to working with children and his observation of one influential teacher's dedication to their job;

> I had a really bad one [woodwork teacher] in Year 7 and 8 and then 9 and 10 I got this woodwork teacher who was probably pushing retiring age but he was genuine and he treated all the students like he wanted to help them and I thought 'you know, this doesn't seem a bad life', if I could be like him it would be a good career. I think it was the way he treated the kids…he was genuine, whereas some of the other subjects you get the feeling the teachers were just there for the job and probably for the holidays.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie's experiences of her teachers were similar to that of other participants. Her primary teacher was a warm and nurturing person that cared for and encouraged her in her development and learning. A respected high school teacher, equally admired, approached teaching in a different way and yet also appealed to Sophie.

> Teachers were my most favourite people in my life, so I always just wanted to be like them. I had one particular teacher in grade one… I wanted to be just like that teacher. She was really encouraging to everybody in the class…she

> trusted us…she was just a lot of fun…I had a teacher in high school, he was quite hard actually, a hard man…very army like. And I was really shy…I suppose he did things a little bit differently…he was…really good with praise and sort of showing the rest of the class and getting you to help out, that sort of stuff. So, it was almost like…if you made him proud, it made you feel really good…So I'd try really hard in those classes with him.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie also experienced teaching at the other end of the spectrum but acknowledged that this too had influenced her in the image she holds of herself in the teaching role.

> I used to dance as well for a long time and my dance teacher was a scary lady (laugh), so I don't want to be like that…I guess there were certain people like that, that have influenced me to not be a certain type…I have had one very negative teaching or learning experience in primary school…For quite a long time I used to say "I 'm going to be a teacher so I cannot do that". I can be better than that teacher was.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

Jessica, a second-year participant recalled how her interest in teaching never really left her thinking, despite moving in a different direction undertaking a Bachelor of Arts degree. Jessica acknowledged the influence of her mother as a role model in the teaching profession.

> I always wanted to be a teacher and then I sort of forgot about it and…did my Bachelor of Arts…halfway through it, I actually thought about changing to education but then I thought that I'd end up with more opportunities if I actually finished a degree and then did teaching…it's something I've…always carried with me…I didn't really know what it entailed and my mother was a teacher…I just always…liked…the idea of teaching.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE, Second-year)

Michael also finished his studies and obtained a trade qualification, but the experience of working with an inspirational teacher encouraged him to see teaching as something he could and would like to explore in the future.

> When I started my trade…there was a guy there that was really inspirational, quite knowledgeable and…[a] role model I guess…if there was one teacher that I thought of very highly [it] would be him.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE, Second-year)

Nigel, upon reflection, recognised his long-held desire to be a teacher and his perceived suitability to the role. Despite the opinions of others, he noted teaching was not a job that anyone can do. These were opinions he had been exposed to that made him view the profession through a negative lens. His mother's recent entry into teaching allowed Nigel to see, from a personal perspective, the process of studying, changing careers and being inspired by the profession. He realised when he was not being 'pushed' by his friends and family to enter teaching, he realised for himself the attractiveness of the profession.

> Looking back I thought I was always going to be a teacher…I think it was inevitable…[I] really do think it was what I was meant to do…I don't think everyone can do it…My mum is a teacher, she…only finished her degree about five or six years ago and as soon as she started she was pushing me towards it…she's been pushing me towards it for years…when people finally started giving me my own space it really just hit home that's…where I'm supposed to be.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE, Second-year)

As a second-year participant in the study, Nigel was able to reflect on how working as a teacher's aid and Professional Experience affirmed his decision to teach.

> I started working as a teacher's aid and…every day I'd go to work and it's like, this is what I want…especially after my prac [PE] because…every day, I [would] have any interaction at school it…hits…home how much this is what I'm supposed to be doing.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE, Second-year)

Similar to many other participants, a positive schooling experience and/or particular inspirational teachers made the teaching profession and the contribution one could make to the lives of others seem attractive and rewarding.

> I had two really, really good teachers in college and I just thought…even now, they're my heroes, they're the teachers I want to be and I think then, seeing the difference they made [it was important].
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE, Second-year)

Sue's financial situation after a divorce and the need to provide for her son, were significant features of her decision-making. With a well-established career as a hairdresser, Sue looked for a new career that aligned with her needs but also was enjoyable for her.

> My main focus for actually finding a career [was] that I could support myself as an individual and not be reliant on someone else…I was also looking for something that would fulfil my needs as well as a career, I didn't just want to do anything…as well as having something that I can see that I can do and achieve and…just strive to…enjoy what's left of my life and career.
>
> (Sue, Post-PE, Second-year)

The external influence of role modelling from family members, shared by other participants, was also a key feature of Jessica's decision to teach. Jessica's mother, a teacher in her country of origin, shared her love of teaching and the profession

with her daughter that proved to be a factor in Jessica's decision to choose to teach.

> My mum…she's from the Philippines…she taught maths while she was there and…she always…had so many fond memories…of what she did…with other teachers and…the students and certain things that she loved about the students and loved about teaching, I guess that's sort of influenced me as well.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE, Second-year)

The reasons for choosing to teach were different for each participant. They varied in intensity and origin from the long-held desire to teach that had been set aside until now, or a fleeting thought that was quickly acted upon. A sense of personal and professional satisfaction appeared to be essential and common to the participants. They needed to feel a sense of contribution to the wider community, to society and to the quality of their own lives. They needed to nurture and to give to those that would benefit from them doing so, in particular, children.

### 6.5.7 Aspirations

Having made the decision to leave their previous careers and enrol in the B. Teach program, ideas and thoughts about where they would 'fit' in the profession began to be important for this study's participants.

The internal and external influences, although contributing factors to the development and refinement of the pre-service teacher's professional identity, participants were to be further influenced and shaped by the theoretical and practice-based teaching and learning within their program.

As the academic year commenced, participants began to consider: What will teaching be like? What kind of teacher do I wish to be? And, how do I see

myself enacting the role of the teacher? This thinking was encouraged by the use of reflective practices within the program units but no unit work sought reflection on the aspirations these pre-service teachers held for their future careers or their image of themselves as a teacher.

Joanne had reflected on what a teacher should be, and certainly the kind of teacher *she* wanted to be, based on her own experiences and observations.

> [I] wanted to be a nice teacher, one that students would feel comfortable with and a…teacher that was fun, I think these are all kind of things that…I think good teachers are but also probably things I am like. I've always been an energetic kind of person and so I want my classes to be a reflection of that.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Joanne also gave thought to how the development of solid relationships with students, a key feature of her image of a teacher, would impact student engagement.

> I don't think it should be someone that just teaches the curriculum, you have to understand the kids…I think you have to…get to know them a bit so that they feel that they trust you and there's a respect…if you don't feel comfortable with a teacher or you can't trust them then you're not going to value their teaching…you might develop a dislike for that particular subject just because of that teacher…they shouldn't be someone that switches off at the end of a lesson.
>
> (Joanne, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma hadn't formed a solid image of herself in the classroom teaching space but rather built her notion of teaching on the one-on-one experiences she had enjoyed in her previous career, elements of which inspired her to enrol in the B. Teach program.

> I can't see myself standing in front of a classroom of children…I've actually been teaching people…to use computer based programs and so I can see myself working with people one on one, so throw me into a classroom situation that's going to be interesting…having more children, all these children sort of looking at me and relying on me to teach them things, it scares me…I'm looking forward to the challenge but…I don't have a picture of myself standing in front of the classroom, I sort of have a picture of…how I would like the classroom to be, but not so much myself standing there teaching the children…it's a bit scary!
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Emma also expressed concerns regarding the deep empathy she felt for others. She was concerned that being an 'emotional' teacher would detract from her professionalism and how this personal quality was at odds with what she thought teachers should be.

> The emotional part of it would be a challenge for me because I am a very emotional person and I would get emotionally attached, especially given the age group that I think that I'll be teaching…little children seem to attach more to you than older children do.
>
> (Emma, Pre-PE, First-year)

Kim's image of herself as a teacher was more connected to relationships and experiences rather than standing in front of a class full of children. This reflected the key factors she associated with the teaching role as being one of an interpersonal activity more so than the practicalities of enacting the role.

> [I] never actually saw myself in a classroom standing at the board and giving a lesson as such. It's been more…on the human social side of actually having relationships with people and trying to bring out their best.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

Although the image Kim held of herself in the classroom was still developing, her aspirations for the kind of teacher she wished to be and how she saw the role of the teacher were quite explicit. Her desire was to be the kind of teacher that was student centred and enthusiastic about her subject area, but also understanding that the learning journey belongs to the student.

> I do want to try to instil enjoyment in learning and an interest in learning, in the whole class and not just those people that are quite good at it in the first place...you pick up the kids that are weaker and just feed them little titbits of confidence, building confidence to get them to realise that they actually have potential as well…So I think teaching will be a lot of thinking on your feet…and really trying hard to build relationships with students…When I get to class…I will be enthusiastic about what I'm doing, as nervous as I am, and that hopefully they will pick up on an enthusiasm and they will also be enthusiastic about what they're doing…also probably give them permission not to do well.
>
> (Kim, Pre-PE, First-year)

Although Kim had fragments of imagery starting to materialise, Judy indicated that she was waiting for her first classroom experience before committing to any idea of how she might see herself in the teaching role. Nonetheless Judy started to articulate what she wanted to demonstrate in the classroom.

> Well, I haven't got to the stage of what I would be like yet because we still haven't gone to our pracs [PE]…but some of the good teachers…really motivate the class…that's one of the things I'd like to be able to do…perhaps one of the things [I would like to demonstrate is] patience…[and] being willing to adapt.
>
> (Judy, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sarah imagined the classroom climate to be a reflection of her personality. She wanted to create a learning space that was not at all stressful for students, a positive experience that may see her described as a 'good teacher'.

> Probably very, very relaxed…discipline is not my strong suit but that's something I am working on…hopefully very relaxed and get their [students'] interest in whatever subject I'm teaching, just sort of encourage them…so hopefully [I will be] a good teacher, hopefully, one that they [students] can sort of reflect on and say, "yes, they taught me good things"…whether it's life skills or educational knowledge or whatever.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sarah described several elements of her future practice that took into account the emotional, mental and physical wellbeing of the students. The researcher, in paraphrasing and clarifying Sarah's response during the interview, used the word 'holistic' to consolidate her description. It was a term that Sarah agreed was a good descriptor of her anticipated approach but she indicated she was mindful of the additional relationship building this entailed. Sarah was careful to delineate the line between 'friend' and 'friendly' regarding her relationships with her students.

> Well holistic is a very good term, I like that…hopefully I'm approachable and that I can deliver whatever information I need to deliver in a very clear manner and if I'm approachable, if they have queries about anything, whether it's the subject we're teaching or something that's happening in school or anything that they feel comfortable to come and talk to me…I don't want to be friends with them, I don't need to be friends with all the kids but just if they just like who I am, at least not dislike who I am…liking me, respecting me as a teacher, as a person but not as a friend, I don't have unrealistic expectations as far as that goes.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sarah was reflective about her teaching philosophies and how she might assess her own teaching practice in the future. Equally, she was realistic about her aspirations in the classroom and what the actual experience may be like, something she expected to know more about after her Professional Experience placement.

> I think if you love learning, you learn more and you go after it, just that much harder, I think loving learning is very, very important part and passing that on, if I can do that then I've done a good job…I am slightly idealistic about what being in a classroom is going to be like…my first couple of experiences will probably change me, well hopefully not too dramatically, but it will definitely change the way I approach things… time will tell.
>
> (Sarah, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michelle's passion for her subject areas, art and English, were a feature of her teaching philosophy. She realised that her passion may not, despite her best efforts, be reflected by her students but aspired to be aware of student interests and to encourage and ignite a love of her subject area rather than imposing it upon them.

> I'll be specialising in art and English. They're two areas that I am passionate about…you just sort of…imposing [sic] your philosophy on life onto the kids and that's a real responsibility and so even though I do want them to grow and blossom sort of in the same direction that I did…that's one of my fears…I'll be too sort of preachy about [it], but really I just think that I just want…to teach…[I want to harness the] potential that already exists in every child and that it is there to grow…knowledge isn't something that's poured into you, it's something that can grow out of you and you experience it.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

Michelle considered her idealistic view of her future practice and the kind of teacher she wished to be. Other participants recognised their potential deficits in

the classroom, whereas Michelle was confident that her optimistic view of her skills and classroom presence would be realised in practice.

> I'm a fairly optimistic person…I don't want to sound too conceited… but I hope…my…attitude towards them [students] is going to be sort of positive enough and strong enough…just having a strong presence and direct and that honesty and integrity…will exude, so there won't be too many behavioural issues coming up.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

Although Michelle was confident her approach to her students would eliminate the majority of behavioural challenges she may encounter in the classroom, a clearer image of herself as a teacher was developing the more she engaged with her program content. She recognised that in order for her to feel relaxed, confident and practice with a sense of efficacy, she needed to develop her content knowledge so that she presented as competent in front of the students and in doing so, earn their respect.

> Every time I go to a lecture, I imagine myself being a teacher…I envisage myself in my classroom…it's an environment that's fairly…calm and mature and I see myself as being…in the teaching role…it's professional but at the same time it's very open…and mutually respectful…I want to be really, really sure of myself. I don't want to have any gaps in my knowledge…I want to feel very secure and that I can cope with any questions that the students ask me.
>
> (Michelle, Pre-PE, First-year)

William's developing image of himself in the classroom featured his enthusiastic, adventurous nature. He saw himself taking advantage of teachable moments and opportunities to learn and teach something new. There was a spontaneous element to his approach and in his delivery of the curriculum, although he was uncertain how this might play out in the realities of the classroom. William gave thought to the perceived structured nature of the school environment and

recognised that this may not appeal to him long term.

> My idea of a reasonable class is actually to do something unexpected like bring in a piece of road kill and dissect it on the table and get to check it out…I really have no idea having never done it before. The only thing I can really think of is the work environment itself would be very…institutionalised. Going to a school every day, same bunch of teachers, go to the common room, have your discussions and all that sort of thing, then you go out to the classes. There will be a set pattern in that sort of lifestyle…In the long term, I possibly won't have a career at a school…I really would like to use my teaching to encourage people forever…But, an actual nine to five [job] in one school…I can see myself not doing that forever.
>
> (William, Pre-PE, First-year)

Simon, an MDT specialist, shaped the image of himself specifically around his content area. He recognised that leadership and role modelling were important elements of how he would aspire to conduct himself in the teaching role, but his images related specifically to the skills and knowledge he would be imparting to students and encouraging them in their work.

> I feel if I can teach a woodwork class or a metal work class and have the pleasure of showing a child how to achieve an operation…I think the important part…[is] that I can treat each student as an individual and if they are struggling…give them a technique to do something that is easier and achieves a good outcome.
>
> (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year)

Sophie thought broadly in her imagining of herself as a teacher. Like many other participants, thinking about themselves in the teaching role transcended the physical classroom and the imparting of knowledge and skills to students, to include the bigger aspirations of contributing to the holistic development of the learner and creating positive change in their lives despite the challenges of large class sizes.

> I really want to encourage any…student with any ability that school's not necessarily a bad place to be and even…the basic things like reading and maths can be fun…I would love to be able to help all of the students, even the ones that have a really negative attitude to school and to try to turn that around…I don't know how I'd do that, though.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

As a second-year pre-service teacher, Jessica continued to maintain the aspirations she held for herself in the teaching role. Reflecting on her experiences as a student, she recognised the qualities of 'good teachers', qualities she aspired to.

> I just think of what I liked in a teacher…it…made me realise...it wasn't so much the teachers that just let you do what you want…it's [the]…other teachers that went to so much more effort in planning the lessons and making things interesting and the teachers you could actually see that were passionate about their subject and just really wanted you to know…I think about that a fair bit.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE, Second-year)

Jessica shared that creating a positive classroom climate that encouraged students to feel comfortable rather than regimented was important. She determined that her confidence, patience and genuinely caring about the students were key attributes of a positive classroom, one that she aimed to create.

> [I want to create a] comfortable atmosphere in a class…where the students…aren't afraid to object or…say anything…they're quite comfortable…it's not…military style.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE, Second-year)

From the first stirrings of the call to teach to the enrolment in ITE, participants reflected upon their reasons for choosing their previous careers, their eventual reasons for leaving them and the reasons for actively choosing to become a teacher. The images they held of themselves as teachers, although continuing to develop, focussed upon the practice of teaching and the nurturance of the learner. Some participants viewed the sharing of knowledge and skills as a core part of their professional identity, whereas others described a more holistic image of nurturance, guidance, care and support of the learner, with a secondary focus on imparting curriculum content. The narratives of the pre-service teachers described their motivations for entering ITE. They articulated their aspirations and their professional identity, as it was prior to the commencement of their B. Teach program, prior to theoretical unit teachings and prior to the Professional Experience classroom placement.

Their development continued as pre-service teachers, impacted by the rewarding and challenging experiences they encountered. Their evolution continued to be influenced by both internal and external factors as they transitioned towards beginning teacher status.

### 6.5.8 Professional Experience: The school setting

At the time of this study, first-year B. Teach pre-service teachers undertook a two-week observation Professional Experience. This first classroom experience required no active teaching or planning as it was designed to allow the cohort to observe and adjust to the routines and expectations of a school context. Later in the same year, the first-year pre-service teachers entered the classroom, under the supervision of a Colleague Teacher, with partial responsibility for planning and delivering lessons, as well as managing the behaviour of their class during the times they were teaching. The participants reflected on these PE placements as they described their experience, identified their challenges and rewards, and

discussed their changing perceptions regarding their profession and their place within it.

Judy described 'finding her voice' as one of the earliest realisations of being the teacher in the classroom. Being confident to speak with clarity in front of the class invoked anxiety. She knew a nervous demeanour would not go unnoticed by the students or her Colleague Teacher, however, she described overcoming this during her PE placements.

> I was a bit nervous at first and I reckon that was probably a bit apparent. I've had a bit of trouble raising my voice…I'm having less problems with that [now].
>
> (Judy, During-PE, First-year)

Judy noted that her PE placement in the school setting brought back memories of her own schooling. She noted the routines, the classroom structure and even the smell. Judy described her PE as both challenging and rewarding. Differentiating the curriculum was a particular challenge in practice, as was recognising the teaching strategies she defaulted to as the same as those she was exposed to a child, something she worked actively to resist.

> It is a bit challenging because you're trying to decide, do I go back and go over something or do I move on to the next thing…I'm…reacting against the way I was taught…I like doing things and having my own opinions.
>
> (Judy, During-PE, First-year)

Judy and Sophie both had concerns prior to their PE regarding their ability to 'pitch' work at the appropriate level for her students. Sophie was concerned about how her planned activities would be received whereas Judy had underestimated the ability of the students and was pleasantly surprised by the students exhibiting high levels of functionality in the classroom.

> I just get really nervous about if I do an activity, are they going to think it is stupid depending on the age of the kids.
>
> (Sophie, Post-PE, First-year)

> [We] had this whole class discussion…I was very surprised at the depth and the quality.
>
> (Judy, During-PE, First-year)

Judy acknowledged the skills of learning names and building rapport and relationships with students. Her ability to do so provided her with a sense of intrinsic reward, as did seeing the understanding of her students' progress;

> Seeing students learn things that…you've taught them, having them produce work that really surprises you, understanding something and learning something, be able to respond to something, able to ask questions, things like that [are rewarding].
>
> (Judy, During-PE, First-year)

Sarah too noted the enjoyment of relationship building in her PE journal.

> I would have to say that the relationships I've been fostering are the most enjoyable aspects of my time here. The staff have also been very friendly and welcoming, inviting us to social events. I have gotten a taste of real teaching environments.
>
> (Sarah, Journal, During-PE, First-year)

Michael also discussed the importance of building a relationship with students but expressed his concerns about being too familiar.

> There's got to be a certain level of familiarity for the kids to actually respond to…for them to open up a bit as well and be a bit more relaxed…I think there's a fine line…you don't want to go too far, you don't want the kids to…think you're mates.

(Michael, Post-PE, Second-year)

Sarah noted in her Professional Experience journal how the reputation of the school raised her anxiety leading up to her school placement but this lead in proved to be at odds with her experience.

> I had been warned to brace myself for prac [PE] at this school…however, I was thrilled to have a first week that both challenged my pre-conceived ideals [sic] and surprised me with the good things at this school.
>
> (Sarah, Journal, During-PE, Second-year)

Behaviour management was a key feature of discussions with participants before and after Professional Experience. Some pre-service teachers were relying on the observation period prior to active teaching to determine how their CT managed classroom behaviour. Judy recognised the difficulty of managing student behaviour and noted an additional difficulty of having to adopt the CT strategies and methods that weren't in alignment with her own. However, she noted in her previous PE placement the implementation of a school wide plan was quite supportive.

> I'm still working on it [behaviour management]…I don't like yelling…I'm finding I'm too nice…I don't want to punish…I can try and adopt her [CT] plans but the thing is it's not mine…and I find [it] hard…with this school, it's actually up to the individual teacher but at [name of another school] completely opposite, it was a whole school system…they [students] knew exactly where they stood before they even got into the classroom…it took it out of the teacher's hands…it wasn't something that you have [sic] to worry about.
>
> (Judy, During-PE, First-year)

When considering the challenging aspects of the teaching role, Judy felt the perceived rewards outweighed the perceived challenges. The personal challenge of managing her anxiety, she felt delayed her development of efficacy despite

having early successful teaching and learning experiences. Judy describes the experience is her nervousness in front of the students.

> I don't really have that feeling of I don't want to go back. I did have it in the first prac but that was only because I was still, I still have those nerves. I remember the first time I stood up and I was talking…[then] I was sitting down because my knees were probably shaking…I was probably feeling a bit hot…I guess you could call it stage fright, you're there, everyone's watching you, they're depending on you for something and if you stuff up it's there…[it] makes you very self-conscious.
>
> (Judy, During-PE, First-year)

A unique event whilst on PE highlighted to Judy some of the unforeseen elements of the teaching role. A bank robbery in a nearby shopping centre resulted in the assailant hiding in the school grounds. The school was locked down as the police searched for the armed offender.

> It's been a very interesting week…the kids were a bit excited, they were talking about what's going on… one girl, she was quite frightened but they [the students] were just really getting over excited.
>
> (Judy, During-PE, First-year)

Sarah observed, although relationship building with the students had progressed well, that her attention continued to be on behaviour management, adding to her workload and level of personal challenge.

> Some of the students have taken on the challenge of pissing me off…The challenge is not managing this behaviour but keeping the rest of the class on track… Discipline has been huge for me this week, time at lunch, sending kids out of class, conduct cards – a bit of an uncomfortable task for me personally.
>
> (Sarah, Journal During-PE, Second-year)

Pre-service teachers are prepared initially for the profession through theoretical and practical units at the University. Judy and Nigel reflected on how overcoming their aversion to lesson planning taught at the University had direct relevance in the classroom and improved their feeling of preparedness for teaching.

> I normally don't like doing plans…I'm not a planning person but if you have the plan in front of you, you can't go wrong… when I become a teacher…it's just something you have to do.
>
> (Judy, During-PE, First-year)

> I really do think it will be the planning [most challenging aspect of teaching]... I do understand the importance of planning, especially the new teacher, how important it's going to be to have a million backup plans, so my other goal is to write a bucket load of plans…
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE, Second-year)

Michael recognised the mental burden as well as the physicality of the role as two of the challenges of teaching. He noted that pre-service and beginning teachers tended to not seek help with the mental aspect of the profession when it was needed.

> [When] it's all gone pear-shaped…[beginning teachers]…try and do it by yourself [sic] I think…that a lot of people out of Uni [university] would…not actually…seek help.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE, Second-year)

These aspirations were weighted with the recognised challenges of the school setting experienced during PE. Jessica was more confident about her ability to manage her class than she was about orientating herself in the school. She noted the importance of school-based induction as a key factor in developing efficacy.

> I think it's not so much getting into the classroom it's just getting into the school environment…I never thought that I'd have so much difficulty with other teachers in the school…they're [teachers] always so busy and you just get there and you don't know what to do… the main challenge for me is trying to find the boundary of when you're not annoying another teacher...it's just stepping into a school and not knowing…where the photocopiers are and being a bit afraid to ask other teachers…after a few weeks, it was fine…at first, they're sort of looking at you as an inconvenience.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE, Second-year)

Jessica expanded more on her Professional Experience and reflected on the difficulty of adding to the already heavy workload of teachers and her resultant reluctance either to seek help when she required it or to offer support to her Colleague Teacher.

> I think it's more that I'm conscious on [sic] the pressures… I'm also quite aware…[be]cause I hear them talking to other people about all their pressures, all this stuff they've got to do and then they've got to look after me as well and I just feel terrible for it because as much as I say…"Is there anything I can do?", or help out…they're often determined to do everything themselves…it almost takes them a few days to…realise they've got someone else that they can make go do photocopying and plan other things.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE, Second-year)

Jessica noted her developing understanding of the profession and of the nature of teacher's work. She noted her transition, from imagining fanciful ideas about what kind of teacher she was going to be, to being a teacher who was more realistic about the role and the importance of curriculum delivery.

> I think that's something that's sort of gradually developing and changing throughout the [program]…at first, you think oh I'm going to be a fun teacher, I'm going to be

> great and all this sort of thing and then you…learn a few techniques and you know that's not always great to be fun…I…feel that I really want to be able to be the sort of teacher that has lots of knowledge and the subject that will engage the kids and get them interested in the area that I'm talking about more than anything.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE, Second-year)

### 6.5.9 The university experience and preparation

ITE through the B. Teach program at the University of Tasmania included periods of school-based Professional Experience. Professional Experience is held in high regard by pre-service teachers and typically is viewed by them as by far the most valuable part of learning to be a teacher.

Michael, a second-year participant, acknowledged the contribution made by theoretical teachings at university to his development as a teacher but also recognised the inability of the university to simulate the classroom experience and the impact that had on the pre-service teacher's perceived notion of what teaching will be like and the actual experience of teaching.

> I think you have to learn on the job. As much as Uni [university] prepares you it's not the real thing, so you're going to go out there and you're going to find [it]…dramatically different or confronting or some sort of clash to how you perceive it to be, I think you're going to have to be able to adapt to that and catch up pretty quick.
>
> (Michael, Post-PE, Second-year)

Kim was able to clearly see the connection between theory and practice once in the classroom for some of the key concepts such as behaviour management. As a parent, she recognised the language and strategies as those also advocated to effectively manage your own children.

> There's a lot of stuff that resonated with me for the lectures for behaviour management and class management…the funny thing about it was where everything that they [lecturers] said is what you have to do as a parent of young children…I am putting it into practice in my teaching…and the kids respond very quickly because they recognise it instantly.
>
> (Kim, Post-PE, First-year)

At university, Sarah was advised about the possibility of having to teach out of her direct specialisation and the challenge that posed along with suggesting advice on strategies that could have enabled her to be better prepared.

> We were told from the very first SOSE lesson that it is a huge range and there's no guarantee that you'll be teaching your specialisation…I think if you're just given the skills on how to research out of your area, that should be enough if you're dedicated to it…I would recommend…doing a couple of Degrees before coming in to do SOSE…I think there are possibly too many art subjects that are included as a prerequisite to get into SOSE…there should be maybe a bridger [sic] course over the summer that…those who are applying to teaching should take…do a week on history, a week on geography because some of them really don't have a lot of…experience…for the 7 to 10 [secondary teachers] their skills are not built up enough and they're struggling when they're out in school…I'm struggling in areas of health, geography and politics.
>
> (Sarah, Post-PE, First-year)

Jessica became aware of a lack of focus, in her ITE, on the concept of assessment, something she needed in the classroom. Relying on the knowledge and experience of the Colleague Teacher regarding assessment didn't always guarantee best practice.

> We didn't really do much [about] assessment…in the [program]…on my pracs [PE]…I found it really hard to do…it's a bit overwhelming when you're told you have to

> do it…[and] to show your supervisor…we may have been…exposed to it briefly but they never walked us through how to actually prepare an assessment…it would vary greatly between colleague teachers…a lot of it was just personal opinion.
>
> (Jessica, Post-PE, Second-year)

Sarah found the idea of being formally assessed on one's practice as a pre-service teacher placed a personal as well as professional strain upon her. She recognised the increasing pressure to perform at a higher level and to 'push' herself escalated as the PE progressed, knowing it would culminate in the assessment of her by her Colleague Teacher. Her emotional and physical resilience wavered, increasing her anxiety.

> The biggest challenge I faced…was stepping up to meet expectations…I am being encouraged to do better than average. The workload is big and my energy levels are not great…being assessed hands down the most challenging thing. Doesn't matter how good a day or week I've had, being assessed by someone who has never met me makes me feel ill.
>
> (Sarah, Journal During-PE, Second-year)

Aside from the development of required competencies for teaching, Nigel felt that the university did not prepare him for the poor professional climate at the time in relation to employment prospects post-graduation.

> Most people didn't realise how bad it was until we started…there's a very disgruntled attitude amongst all the students and there has been for a long time about the Faculty of Education taking so many students in when there's just not enough jobs for us, I mean, I understand the whole, in ten years' time…[the profession will be] screaming out for teachers, but at the moment, they're

> taking in students and not telling them until their third, fourth year that they're not going to get a job.
>
> (Nigel, Post-PE, Second-year)

As the participants shared their experiences and described their journeys from early career decisions to their classroom experience as pre-service teachers, the contextual, personal and professional influences upon them were revealed.

The pathway, particularly as career changers, was convoluted and diverse, yet some clear similarities existed. Each of the participants had chosen a career pathway other than education. Their reasons for doing so stemmed from personal interest, opportunity, financial need or other necessity. Having worked or gained qualifications within their previously chosen career, a gravitation towards education occurred. For some, the lack of stimulation or career progression, a need for retraining or a desire for more suitable work conditions encouraged participants to leave their previous careers. For some, their prior positive experiences with working with children or teaching and learning in general initiated exploring classroom teaching as a viable option. Others were pulled toward teaching by a variety of internal and external influences, the urge to contribute to the wider community, a sense of intrinsic reward and most dominantly, a long-held desire to teach.

External factors such as, family, friends and former teachers influenced and encouraged the move to teaching as well as the internal elements for each of the participants. The need for intrinsic reward in their work, and a desire to contribute more broadly to society, was accompanied by consideration of their family based and lifestyle needs. These internal and external factors formed the lens through which the pre-service teacher viewed their ITE, including both theoretical and professional experiences each of which further developed the professional identity of the pre-service teacher.

Two key images of the 'holistic teacher' and the 'practitioner' emerged. The holistic teacher emphasised the nurturance, guidance, care and support of students as fundamental to the successful teaching of the child. The practitioner focused on the skill development, imparting of knowledge and the pedagogy of teaching and considered these to be of primary importance. The school contexts consolidated these images of teaching for most of the participants as they transitioned toward the beginning teacher status. Within the context of the school setting, the importance of relationship was shown to be central to the pre-service teacher's ability to teach students, work in partnership with parents and collaborate with staff. This revelation impacted the practitioner more considerably than the holistic teacher creating greater shift in thinking about the teaching profession and a need to recognise the importance of investing in relationships in order to maximise student outcomes. Reflection on their own experiences with influential former teachers or modelling by significant teachers in their lives such as teachers in their family or teacher friends reinforced the importance role that the teacher plays in the education experience of students. These internal and external influences continued to impact the evolving professional identity of the pre-service teachers.

## 6.6 Summary

This chapter has presented data collected utilising qualitative instruments to respond to Research Question 4: *What contextual, personal or professional issues have contributed to changing perceptions of these pre-service teachers?* The lived experiences of the participants as they were embedded within the professional context of their new career were captured. Preservice teachers revealed that a family culture that encouraged education and significant teachers in their own schooling was a strong influence in their decision to teach. A desire to create change in their own lives, acknowledging the appeal of teaching and feeling a sense of inadequacy of their previous careers, were strong drivers for changing careers.

The story of the growth of the pre-service teacher and their emerging professional identity was evident through their narratives. The impact of the practical, in-school Professional Experience and theoretical underpinnings provided by their ITE in relation to their increasing efficacy was explored. The quality of the Professional Experience, the influence of the colleague teacher, and the perceived reward/challenge balance became evident.

In examining this research question, the data analyses provided information regarding a range of personal and professional influences related to the context of preparing to become a teacher. The question investigated the personal motivations for entering the teaching profession and the ideals and expectations held by the pre-service teachers as the standard to which all their experiences were compared. The question brought forth the personal reflections of the pre-service teachers regarding the impact of commencing or returning to study as well as the personal responses to the perceived and experienced nature of classroom teaching in Australian schools.

# Chapter 7

# Discussion

## 7.1 Introduction

The discussion of findings presented within this chapter highlight the strong motivation of these participants to create change in their own lives and to seek meaning and purpose through their work. Their commitment to the decision to embrace teaching as *their* new chosen life path is evident. Dominant motivations, understandings, beliefs and perceptions of the career-change pre-service teachers were revealed as they navigated the rigours of ITE. Their continual reflection, refinement, and re-imagining of themselves as teachers was ongoing as they transitioned to becoming teachers, recognising their enduring perceptions of self in and through the role. These people worked hard to engineer their own successful outcomes and identifying their future and ongoing intentions and needs to build efficacy and competency through continued professional learning.

Throughout this study, these career-change pre-service teachers shared, who they were (Research Question 1), what they understood, believed and perceived about the teaching profession (Research Question 2) and how they and their perceptions evolved and changed through the process of ITE (Research Question 3). The impact of their engagement with ITE and the teaching profession were also revealed (Research Question 4) through their changing priorities and responses.

**Research Question 1**

*What are the demographic and preferential profiles of the pre-service teachers enrolled in the Bachelor of Teaching Degree at the University of Tasmania?*

**Research Question 2**

*What are the initial perceptions, understandings, and beliefs of pre-service teachers about being a classroom teacher and their own professional motivations and aspirations?*

**Research Question 3**

*As pre-service teachers progressed through their initial teacher education program from enrolment to completion, how do their perceptions change?*

**Research Question 4**

*What contextual, personal or professional issues have contributed to changing perceptions of these pre-service teachers?*

Together, these research questions provided the framework for examination of various elements of people entering teaching.

## 7.2 Profiles and aspirations

In the past two decades, the pathways chosen for admission into Australian ITE programs have remained relatively stable, with approximately 40% of pre-service teachers entering ITE directly from formal schooling (AITSL, 2017a). The remaining 60% of pre-service teachers have entered ITE through alternative pathways, including other tertiary studies, professional qualifications, vocational education and/or training as mature-aged students or by other means. This study highlighted career-change pre-service teachers as a significant cohort within the university. Many of these enrolled pre-service teachers had pursued other pathways prior to enrolment. As a result, their demographic and preferential profiles have varied considerably, influenced by their circumstances and lived

experience. This section presents findings that directly relate to the first of the research questions by exploring the demographic and preferential profiles of these pre-service teachers enrolled in the Bachelor of Teaching Degree at the University of Tasmania.

### 7.2.1 A dominant profile of the participant cohort

The demographic data from this study revealed the predominant profile of those entering into the B. Teach program were female, 20-25 years of age and in possession of a Bachelor of Arts degree. They entered this program with an intention to teach within Australia but also overseas, although the second-year cohort showed an increasing tendency to prefer teaching in Tasmania as they approached program completion. Most intended to teach in the secondary (Grades 7-10) and college (Grades 11-12) sectors in an area of The Arts, that reflected their own prior experiences and interests, including contemporary arts, design, graphic design, fine arts, music, performing arts and/or visual arts. These pre-service teachers also intended to seek employment in metropolitan, public schools, rather than moving to rural/remote locations to commence their careers.

### 7.2.2 Experience guiding intentions

Although demographic data from this study supports what has long been observed, that teaching continues to become a female-dominated profession (Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; Riddell & Tett, 2010), results here demonstrate that these female pre-service teachers intended to enter secondary classrooms. This alternate pathway away from early childhood and primary settings, reflects a swing away from what has been typically reported. Although it is well documented that differences in gender ratios are evident in different sectors and curriculum areas, like senior secondary Mathematics and Science fields (Haase, 2008; Marshall et al., 1999; Riddell & Tett, 2010; Tett & Riddell, 2009), these career-change pre-service teachers were focused on the utilisation of their previous life experiences and were treading paths into previously male-

dominated spaces. Their experiences and knowledge better equipped them for the subject specialisations and curriculum area alignment within secondary contexts.

### 7.2.3 The winding path taken to reach teaching

Career-change pre-service teachers entering the profession through alternative pathways, like the B. Teach program, are on average much older than those following an undergraduate pathway into ITE (Tigchelaar et al., 2008). This indirect pathway into ITE often varied greatly for participants in duration and in response to diverse experiences. Participants of this study discussed a wide range of opportunities that were afforded to them after leaving formal schooling which steered them into their previous career and life pathways. For some, there was the attraction of full-time employment, trade apprenticeships or further education. For others, individual family, financial or geographical circumstances sometimes necessitated entry into the workforce despite a long-held desire to teach or more than a passing interest in the profession.

These career-changers described their previous priorities of traveling, taking a 'gap year' or longer, or not studying beyond Year 12 as reasons for their life directions. Those that engaged in previous study or employment in other careers prior to entering teaching did so for a variety of reasons, regularly including employment opportunities, personal/professional interests and financial necessity. The opportunity to take up enticing offers of apprenticeships or other work options were identified as influential factors for embracing previous careers.

Some participants had been encouraged to pursue study or employment options in areas of interest but later found employment in these sectors was difficult to obtain. They were then forced to explore other study or pathways to employment and teaching became prominent in their thinking. Sarah, a first-year participant, declared that her degree in The Arts "wasn't worth anything in the real world"

and looked to supplement her degree with one she was confident would result in employment.

The pursuit of and need for job security and a steady income is a common theme for those entering teaching (Bauer et al., 2017; De Cooman et al., 2007; Richardson et al., 2001; Richardson & Watt, 2006) and so it was for this cohort as well. For some, their life paths had altered considerably, including changes to the family structure, parenting or caring for family members. This necessitated other changes, like the need for stable employment, and this made entering teaching at their stage of life more possible and beneficial, as reported elsewhere (Anthony & Ord, 2008; Bauer et al., 2017). Consequently, it was the convergence of factors that had ultimately brought them to teaching.

### 7.2.4 The significance of change for Career-change pre-service teachers

In Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012; P. Hudson & Hudson, 2008; Hutchison, 2012; Shine, 2015), career-change teachers, with their extensive range of backgrounds, skills and experiences, make a significant contribution to the diversity of the teaching profession (Richardson & Watt, 2002; Williams & Forgasz, 2009). Despite their inexperience, career-change graduate teachers are often perceived as more competent than undergraduate preservice teachers (Brouwer, 2007; Tigchelaar et al., 2008). Although they are exposed to the complexities of classroom teaching, as all pre-service teachers are, additional complexities exist for the career-change teachers in that levels of professional efficacy they may have enjoyed in other careers is now absent (Tigchelaar et al., 2008). This realignment of fields and perhaps their confidence leads to difficulties in processing their beliefs about teaching, their preconceived notions of the nature of teaching and learning and the necessity to learn new pedagogical strategies (Richardson

& Watt, 2006). Their lived experience of ITE can be profoundly affected by their motivations, expectations, and outcomes (Walters, 2000). This was particularly evident in the data that conveyed the individual level of risk that each participant took to enter into teaching, the temporary or ongoing financial costs of changing careers and how these decisions were perceived by others. The participants recognised the risks and how the success or failure of their choices were scrutinised by those around them. Although the decision to teach had been carefully assessed by the pre-service teachers prior to enrolment, they acknowledged perceptions that teachers were not highly valued within their community. This added a perceived pressure of interrogation by family, friends and former colleagues as they "can't understand why I would want to do that [teaching]" (Simon, Pre-PE, First-year).

### 7.2.5 Adjusting intentions in response to experience and context

Tasmania is a unique and isolated setting as an island state, geographically separate from but politically part of Australia. Access to this island state is restricted to ferry trip or flight only. Within this context, face-to-face tertiary learning within ITE is only provided by the University of Tasmania.

In order to capitalise on their decision to enter teaching, participants considered employment opportunities in any location, such was their strong desire to teach. This included leaving Tasmania. There was a perception by some participants that few teaching jobs were available in Tasmania due to an oversupply of teachers, as exemplified in Nigel's response (Post-PE, Second-year). He suggested one might need to relocate beyond Tasmania if full-time, permanent employment was to be gained. This highlighted that those living and working in Tasmania and seeking to make a career change into teaching were not only considering the implications of changing career but also the possible relocation out of the state. This in itself

magnified the importance of decisions that led to enrolling in the B. Teach program and revealed the level of commitment the participants brought with them.

Evidence of this 'all-in' approach was woven throughout the participants' responses and was particularly evident within the first-year cohort. At the point of commencing their ITE pathway, first-year pre-service teachers reported being open to change and opportunity. As previously discussed, they also felt the pressure to maximise their chances of gaining employment. Together, these factors appeared to have produced an initial flexibility to do whatever was required to gain employment. Equally, the first-year cohort appeared to be a more mobile cohort with fewer commitments to bind them to the local context. This was emphasised by individual's reported flexibility and capacity to 'follow' work.

### 7.2.6 Adjusting engagement with experience and context

The participants in this study were undertaking the B. Teach program in face-to-face mode and this had required them to relocate and establish themselves in the local Launceston community. This recent and considered relocation may have contributed to the increase in responses of intentions to only teach in Tasmania as they progressed throughout the program. They also made subject and specialisation choices to accommodate this preference. An example of this included, Sophie, who had prioritised living and working in Tasmania, by choosing to specialise in primary teaching rather than her secondary dance specialisation. This was because employment opportunities in this field did not exist in Tasmanian schools. Her decision was to change her specialisation rather than her likely geographical location.

Another factor which shaped the changing priorities of the participants included their connections to the local education community. Second-year pre-service

teachers, with the two-year commitment to the B. Teach program had settled within the local community and had started to make connections with the profession. They had begun to build school-based networks and relationships with school communities through Professional Experience placements and this was reflected in their data. This cohort reported a preference for working in Tasmania and demonstrated a reluctance to accept any and all work opportunities, diverging from the perceptions of their first-year counterparts. Developing an understanding of their local professional circumstances allowed them to demonstrate a greater confidence in securing a local teaching position, which better reflected their personal needs.

### 7.2.7 Previous experiences informing future teaching specialisations

#### 7.2.7.1 Intentions relating to the specialisation and teaching level

The B. Teach program attracted individuals with previous work experience in fields that best aligned to secondary school or college settings. As such, the majority of participants nominated an intention to teach within secondary settings. As they progressed through the program, participants also settled on areas of specialisation that they wished to pursue (mathematics, English, science). The newly enrolled first-year pre-service teachers were still determining their options or requirements in the context of their previous study and work experience.

Even though a specialisation was required at commencement, pre-service teachers were aware of the possibility that their teaching preferences may not be what they were required to actually teach in schools and were accepting of this. This 'out-of-field' experience is consistent with research addressing the problem in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas such as mathematics and science (du Plessis et al., 2014, 2017; Ingersoll, 2001; Weldon, 2015, 2018). For the participants, it just added another layer of complexity to the process of securing

work as a teacher; nevertheless, they were prepared to be flexible in order to make it happen.

Early childhood and primary teaching requires graduate teachers to teach competently across all mandated curriculum areas. Those participants who nominated specialisations for early childhood and primary teaching as their intended teaching levels were not expected to identify as having a specialist area, rather they considered themselves generalist teachers (Thornton, 1995). Low numbers of early childhood and primary specialisation nominations within this participant cohort was anticipated, as it reflected what was established in the literature that this pathway was often the route taken to enter secondary teaching. The low percentage of early childhood nominations here was expected, as these teachers are typically younger, female teachers who enter ITE programs directly from Grade 12. They often commence with a long-established intention to teach and with a strong personal metaphor of the teacher as a nurturer (Sumsion, 2003). These early childhood teachers and those intending to teach in primary schools tend to take a more direct route to teaching through the Bachelor of Education, Early Childhood or Primary programs. Nevertheless, those career-change participants within the cohort who intended to teach in early childhood and/or primary settings remained intent on doing so, including relocating to maximise employment opportunities.

#### 7.2.7.2 Intentions relating to location of employment

The University of Tasmania offers ITE programs online and in the three largest metropolitan centres within Tasmania: Launceston, Hobart, and Burnie. The majority of the Tasmanian population is located within these three urban centres. Due to the concentration of population in these areas and the need for B. Teach students to be located in Launceston for two years to complete the B. Teach program, it was anticipated that these participants would demonstrate a preference to teach exclusively in metropolitan schools.

For the purpose of Professional Experience, pre-service teachers were usually placed within placement settings within a one-hour commute of their nominated place of residence. For most second-year participants, this meant that they had engaged in PE placements close to home, in and around Tasmania's metropolitan areas. As a result, the nature of the ITE program quite possibly reinforced their preference for local teaching contexts, particularly as these experiences simultaneously highlighted possible teaching roles and helped them to establish professional school-based networks for support.

The first-year cohort demonstrated greater flexibility and variability in their preferences. They indicated their preparedness to teach across all curriculum areas as they saw gaining employment in any location as a 'foot in the door'. Despite their reported willingness to do what was required to secure employment, they also reported an intent to transfer to metropolitan schools after the minimum service period had been served or through applying for positions advertised for specific schools located in metropolitan locations. As a result, over time, the first-year cohort reinforced the intentions of the second-year cohort to live and work locally, at least in the longer term.

#### 7.2.7.3 Intentions relating to employment sector

With the majority of teachers in Tasmania employed in the public sector, participants perceived job opportunities to be more likely to be found there. Participants discussed teaching positions within independent schools in Tasmania as highly desirable, difficult to obtain, describing them as 'dream jobs'. Intending only to seek employment in independent schools was seen as greatly reducing their opportunities of gaining employment after graduation. No participant (from either cohort) limited themselves to seeking employment exclusively within the independent sector, despite some long-term intentions to teach in such schools. A small proportion of participants reported a preference for teaching in independent schools based on personal experience, family culture and personal ethos surrounding their religious backgrounds. These participants also reported a

strong preference to work primarily in Catholic systemic schools, although other employment opportunities would be considered if they were available.

### 7.2.8 Summary of profiles and aspirations

The above-mentioned factors led participants to enter teaching at a variety of ages and informed their preferences and teaching aspirations. As a result, their initial openness to opportunity and flexibility aligned with their commitment to the profession, which was made prior to enrolment. It was with time and experience in the ITE program that the career-change pre-service teachers began to consider and affirm their personal preferences and their capacity and intention to fulfil them. Throughout this process, they continued to be hopeful that their goals and career aspirations would eventuate and that they had made the right decision to pursue teaching. They were also vigilant for signs that if these preferences and intentions were not quite right, they were able to adjust and recalibrate to ensure that they were right.

## 7.3 Motivations for teaching

For the participants in this study, realising the desire to enter teaching at a later life-stage often stemmed from intensely personal and/or social reasons. Like it does for many (Anthony & Ord, 2008; Bauer et al., 2017; Priyadharshini & Robinson-Pant, 2003; Richardson et al., 2001; Richardson & Watt, 2005), a long-held desire to teach (intrinsic), a want to make a difference in the lives of others (altruistic) and/or to change undesirable personal financial situations (extrinsic), propelled this change. Exploring their initial perceptions, understandings and beliefs about being a classroom teacher and documenting their professional motivations and aspirations were approached through Research Question 2.

### 7.3.1 Seeking meaning and purpose

For some participants in this study, consistent with the extant literature, significant life events such as redundancy or divorce necessitated a tangible and immediate response and life redirection, as it often does for others (Bauer et al., 2017; Tigchelaar et al., 2008). In addition to changes that meet the needs of the individual's circumstances, a dominant, underpinning motivation and perceived benefit of teaching was pre-service teachers' intentions to contribute to others through teaching. A unifying theme amongst the participants was to achieve a sense of meaning and purpose through their work. They wanted to feel that what they did mattered beyond themselves and gave something of substance to others and society, adding weight to altruistic factors being a significant motivator for entering teaching (De Cooman et al., 2007; Thomson & Palermo, 2014). As a result, this reinforced other factors and together became an impetus for change.

Regardless of the pathway taken to arrive at ITE or the time spend in previous careers, all enrolling pre-service teachers in this study, at some point, had felt a desire to leave their previous career or field of study and choose to teach. Participants shared that their previous occupations had become unfulfilling, were no longer sustainable, or both. For others, redundancy, injury or changing family responsibilities were cited as being the catalyst for a change of career. Although these acute life events were the driver for a number of pre-service teachers, the overwhelming majority revealed their growing lack of fulfilment in their previous work lives. This became a significant factor in their decision to pursue teaching. They identified a lack of stimulation or progression that fed an increasing sense of stagnation in their previous careers and this served as a strong motivation to create change in their lives (Han & Yin, 2016). This fueled an urge to find ongoing learning, professional challenge, and meaning through their work endeavours. The need for self-fulfillment was important but an altruistic motivation to contribute to the lives of others manifested

in what participants referred to as a 'call' to teach (Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2011).

### 7.3.2 The planting of seeds through positive experiences

Previous opportunities to work with children through coaching sports teams, leading group activities or participating in camps had led participants to consider where other equally intrinsically rewarding experiences may be gained. For example, Joanne's positive involvement working with children through the Girl Guides confirmed her choice to pursue teaching as a career. This experience served as a 'trial' to determine if working with children aligned with her disposition. Joanne also explained, "[I] just love working with kids…it just seems the natural place to go, is to teach" (Pre-PE Interview, First-Year). Similarly, Sarah's experiences of working with children in summer camps provided the impetus to consider an education pathway. She emphaised that "I'd been doing volunteer work at children's camps for years, I decided teaching was a logical step" (Pre-PE, First-year). In a similar way, Sophie's enjoyable experiences of teaching dance production highlighted the intrinsically rewarding aspects of working with children, "I'd go from work to school…the moments when students would see the overall results and everyone would be really excited…it was a great experience" (Pre-PE, First-year). For Emma, the relational interaction with school-based students provided the sense of intrinsic and altruistic reward she sought through teaching. "I like the one-on-one with people…I find that [helping others] is very rewarding…it's probably confirmed my desire to go into teaching" (Pre-PE, First-year). Whereas for William, this same sense of reward stemmed not from working with children as much as the educational exchange of sharing knowledge with others, which came from working as

a tour guide. The variety of motivations to teach shared here are echoed in the literature that explores motivations to teach and the sustaining of the motivation to teach (Anthony & Ord, 2008; Han & Yin, 2016; Richardson & Watt, 2002, 2006; Sharif et al., 2016; Watt & Richardson, 2007).

### 7.3.3 Inevitability and the 'call' to teach

For many of the participants, the discontent they felt in their previous careers motivated them to seek alternative careers. Their previous positive exchanges with children, emphasised above, including through informal teaching processes highlighted teaching as a worthy possible option. For some within this cohort, teaching was not necessarily born out of discontent with their previous career but rather a 'calling' or the urge to seek more, do more or to be more personally and professionally. This attraction to teaching is widely recognised in the literature and often emerges from a long-held desire to engage in the teaching profession (Anthony & Ord, 2008; Bauer et al., 2017; Priyadharshini & Robinson-Pant, 2003; Richardson et al,. 2001; Richardson & Watt, 2005).

Michelle, a first-year participant was typical of an individual within this cohort who felt drawn to teaching. She recounted, "All through my primary school years and my high school years, I've always wanted to be a teacher" (Pre-PE). Simon also shared this same sentiment and that changing family circumstances brought about the realisation of this long-held desire to teach; "Family needs [changing care arrangements within his family] pushed me into this course in a way but it was always in the back of my mind that if the opportunity came I probably wouldn't mind doing it" (Pre-PE, First-year). Nigel contributed to how this came to fruition

through his role as a teacher's aide. This was inevitable stepping stone to becoming a teacher. As he explained, "Looking back, I thought I was always going to be a teacher…I think it was inevitable…it was what I was meant to do" (Post-PE, Second-year).

Alongside this desire to teach, there was also a sense of inevitability about doing something about it; an awareness echoed by many of the participants who acknowledged their long-held desires to teach. For example, Kim discussed constantly revisiting the idea through other people's comments and observations of her disposition and quality interactions within teaching settings, as she recounted, "Lots of people had suggested…there would be value in me being a teacher" (Pre-PE, First-year).

Long-held desires to teach, aligned with the intentions to contribute to the lives of others were strong motivators for these career-change pre-service teachers. A sense of intrinsic reward gained through previous interactions with others was fuelled by both internal and external influences. Internal factors such as intrinsic reward, making a contribution to others and meeting family and personal needs featured in the data consistent with what is documented by prominent researchers (Morrison, 2013a; Richardson & Watt, 2005; Sharif et al., 2016; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011).

Alongside these, perceptions about teaching were further influenced by the participants' expectations and hopes. Michelle provided an example, where her passion for art and her desire to practice as an artist underpinned her choice to enter teaching. She believed the lifestyle would not only allow her the time to paint but this in itself would strengthen her

teaching practice, experience, and credibility as an art teacher. She reported that her thinking was shaped by a former teacher who lived this teaching lifestyle. Similarly for Simon, who was a carer and parent within his family, the transition of his youngest son to high school signalled an opportunity for him to prioritise his own needs and return to study and the workforce. Simon perceived teaching as a family-friendly pathway back into the workforce and this was an important motivator. Equally, Simon had always valued education, a belief forged in childhood as a product of his parents influence. He saw teaching as a worthy investment of his attention and commitment.

External influences such as family, friends and former teachers played a significant role in encouraging the career-change decision for these individuals. Their reassurance, modeling, and guidance steered them towards teaching times when they were ready to embrace change in their own lives. The importance of intrinsic and altruistic motivations as a driving force for pursuing teaching was similar to those identified by researchers such as Richardson and Watt (2006) and Manuel and Hughes (2006). However, for the participants in this study, this was a significant change with significant consequences. They had made preparations for commencing pre-service teaching, by making signficant changes in their lives.

Teaching was also seen as a vehicle for further change. The participants' assessments and appraisals of their work and lives served as the catalyst for broadening their outlook, raising their field of vision and extending beyond their current situation. They took stock of what was important

(lifestyle, time, stimulation, family, societal contribution), and had considered how teaching could provide workable outcomes for their lives.

The internal influences existed simultaneously with motivations to meet family needs, satisfy lifestyle factors and be financially secure. These external motivators became justifications for the change they were embarking upon and were prominant in their decision making. Issues relating to job security, family enabling/supporting conditions and work/life balance, were regularly shared when questioned or challenged on decisions to change careers and these response seemed more tangible and justifiable as a motivation for career disruption. In these ways, having valid and tangible reasons to pursue teaching, other than sharing that they possessed a long-held desire to teach or a need to feel a greater sense of self-worth or contribution to the community, appeared to be an important mechanism for justifying this significant commitment and risk, even to themselves.

### 7.3.4 Contributing factors influencing enrolment in ITE

The following flowchart (Figure 75: Mapping career-change teachers' perceptions and motivations for enrolling in ITE) maps the contributing factors reported by participants that influenced their enrolment in ITE. It documents, maps and categorises the data obtained in this study and situates the responses of the pre-service teachers as they described their transition from their previous career to pre-service teacher.

The overwhelming need to find meaning and purpose in their personal and professional lives unified the career-change pre-service teachers in

this study. From a broad range of backgrounds and life paths, two cohorts of career-change pre-service teachers revealed a common thread, their internal, external and altruistic motivations for choosing to teach and to create meaning and purpose in their own lives. Those who completed the B. Teach program demonstrated a strong and unwavering commitment to not only complete their ITE program but to respond to the experiences of ITE to emerge as competitive, committed and 'classroom ready' graduate teachers.

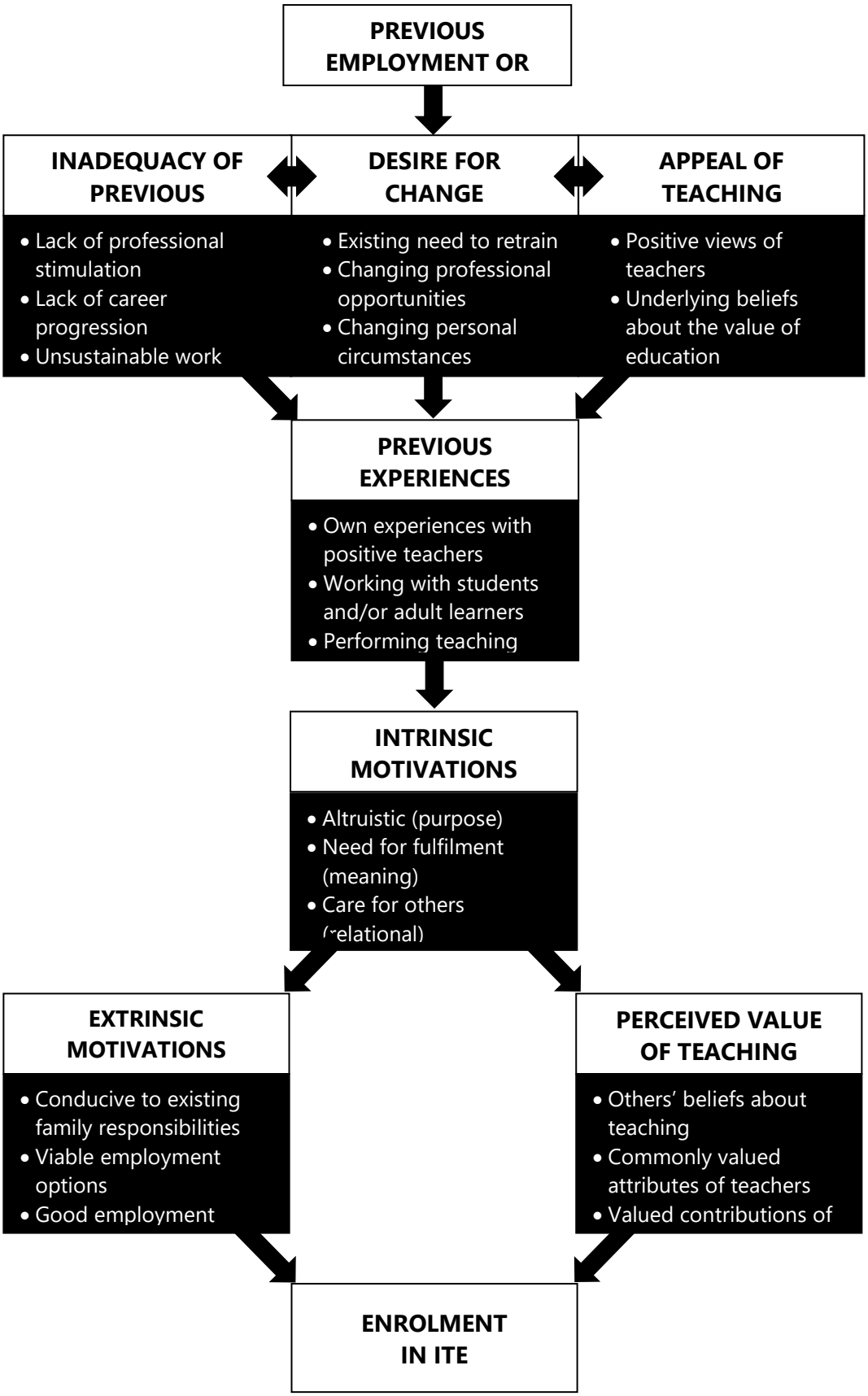



*Figure 75:* Mapping career-change teachers' perceptions and motivations for enrolling in ITE.

## 7.4 Arriving with some realistic but rudimentary perceptions of teaching

Pre-service teachers participating in this study were in possession of an undergraduate degree or trade experience in fields that aligned with teaching. Although they had taken various pathways to enter ITE, they emphasised that they were influenced by personal, professional and contextual factors. Their motivations, drivers, and attraction to teaching, strengthened and sustained their beliefs about their decision to teach in ways similar to those identified by Day and Gu (2014). Extrinsic, intrinsic and altruistic motivators shared by the pre-service teachers highlighted the deeply personal and philosophical motivators for creating change in their own lives and careers as they set about to 'start again' as classroom teachers. The ensuing discussion highlights the changing perceptions of pre-service teachers as they progressed through their ITE program and in doing so, addresses the third research question of this study.

### 7.4.1 A complex assessment of themselves and of teaching

In addressing both Research Questions 1 and 2, to determine the demographic and preferential profiles of the career change pre-service teachers and to document their initial perceptions, understandings and beliefs about being a classroom teacher, a range of questions were presented through the initial questionnaire and interview.

The responses revealed that these career-change preservice teachers entered the B. Teach ITE program from a range of previous employment or study careers. A combination of a lack of professional stimulation, a lack of career progression opportunities, unsustainable work conditions or unmet

expectations were cited by the participants as fuelling a growing discontent in their previous career, similar findings to other prominent researchers (Richardson & Watt, 2005; Sharif et al., 2016). This realisation of the inadequacy of their previous employment or career, coinciding with a desire for change in their own lives led to the consideration of the appeal of teaching. The positive views of teachers, the underlying beliefs about the value of education, perceptions about the stimulation teaching provides, led participants to consider their previous experiences of teaching. Their own experiences with positive teachers, working with students and/or adult learners or performing teaching roles, contributed to the thinking about the intrinsic motivations for teaching in the scheme of a viable career-change.

The intrinsic motivations for teaching, cited by the participants, encompassed the altruistic (purpose), the need for fulfilment (meaning), care for others (relational) and a sense of being valued (reward). This intrinsic assessment of the perceived benefits of teaching led to further exploration of the perceived value of teaching and consideration of the extrinsic motivations for teaching. Other's beliefs about teaching, commonly valued attributes of teachers and the valued contributions of own and others' previous teachers played a significant part in the assessment of the profession as a career-change option. The extrinsic motivations for teaching were simultaneously weighed with the perceived value of teaching in terms of its conduciveness to existing family responsibilities, providing viable employment options, bringing good employment conditions and opportunities for progression. The study and subsequent data analysis allowed for the mapping of the career-change

teachers' perceptions and motivations for enrolling in ITE and the addressing of Research Question 2.

### 7.4.2 Perceptions about teaching being conducive to meeting participants needs

Participants regularly emphasised central elements of teaching that were critical for them. The value of working with children featured as a key motivator for entering the profession. Equally, participants' perceptions about their capacity to manage teaching demands while also managing personal obligations like family responsibilities and children's needs were evident. Interestingly, provisions for acceptable professional work conditions were of least importance to pre-service teachers at the point of enrolment, despite referring to these factors extensively during later participant interviews. The participants' observations of teaching prior to commencing ITE therefore communicated dominant messages about this being a professional space where people could obtain a healthy work/life balance.

### 7.4.3 Consolidating a realistic grasp on the potential challenges of teaching

While participants developed enhanced understandings of the challenges, those things that they identified at the commencement of their ITE program were still prominent at the end. Dominant themes relating to the perceived challenges of teaching continued to feature in their narratives. This could be due to the participants possessing a sound awareness and a realistic grasp of what to expect within teaching, or, that the ITE program

had not disrupted pre-existing perceptions around the challenges of teaching in any significant way, but rather aimed to bring them to the fore and prepare the pre-service teacher for navigating them beyond program completion.

Those dominant themes that remained consistent between commencement and conclusion of the program, included behaviour management, work-related tasks and professional issues (a lack of resources; large class sizes; implementing institutional directives). These were found to be slightly more challenging for participants at the conclusion of the program, confirming that these were legitimate challenges for teachers. Managing relationships with students, staff, and parents and their own personal issues (such as managing work-life balance; anxiety of being in front of the class) were reported to be less challenging, towards the later stage of the program as demanding issues during interviews.

There was a tendency for participants to downplay the challenging aspects of their work, particularly for those interviewed within their placement schools during final PE. To acknowledge their hardships in the classroom may have been perceived as a sign of them not coping with the demands of teaching and may have made this known to supervising teachers. Equally, it may have shown that they were not demonstrating the required resilience to be a successful teacher. Either could have jeopardised future employment opportunities. It is this self-regulated personal standard of what it looks like to be successful in the classroom that drove them to conceal their difficulties (Bandura, 1991, 2018). These pre-service teachers therefore showed some signs of concealing their challenges in the school

environment, as to not appear incompetent, which has been found to occur with other novice teachers (Morrison, 2013a).

Some participants recognised the pressures placed on teachers and the fast-paced work environment of schools and saw themselves as a burden to their CT and other staff. Sarah, in her Post-PE interview, noted her observation of the close collegial relationships between the staff members to be an important source of support. Recognising the transient nature of completing PE in a school, she acknowledged that these close supportive relationships with other professionals were beyond her reach as a pre-service teacher and this realisation forced her to think about developing school-based relationships as a future occurrence rather than a possible experience during PE. Others revealed that their goal whilst on PE placement was to not cause anyone any difficulty and to go about their work causing as little interruption or additional workload to others as possible. This perception, that their status as pre-service teachers was one of inferiority, revealed how influential experiences of ITE are on developing perceptions about teaching but also the complexities that pre-service teachers reveal as they navigate it. Here, the pre-service teachers acknowledged the rich learning opportunities that PE provided, however, they were constantly reminded of their lack of practice-based experience, established school-based relationships and ownership over teaching and learning arrangements. For the participants, colleague teachers' reluctance to release responsibility to them for many aspects of classroom management and decision-making emphasised the disparity of power in the pre-service teacher/CT relationship (B. Johnson & Down, 2012; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010; B. Johnson et al., 2014).

This tenuous balance of interacting with a colleague who was simultaneously a mentor and an assessor was found to be a personal and professional challenge for many of the pre-service teachers. As Le Cornu (2016), emphasises, much more is to be gained from positioning pre-service teacher learning within communities of practice, however this can be difficult to achieve within the complexities of contemporary ITE and the participants certainly found this to be true. As a result, cursory attention is given to the products of this dyadic relationship during ITE with research and policy focusing attention on the benefits of the mentor relationship in the success of the early career teacher. There also tends to be a focus on the professional and ongoing development of the mentor (Carter & Francis, 2001; P. Hudson, 2013; Long et al., 2012; T. Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) without the critical analysis of how the mentor/mentee relationship may limit authentic opportunities to create new knowledge with and for those learning to teach.

### 7.4.4 Shifting perceptions about reward

Participants consistently highlighted personal and professional rewards as particularly attractive and motivating aspects of the teaching profession. Pre-service teachers identified the outcomes of bettering themselves, bettering the lives of children and bettering society as common motivations for choosing to teach, much as others have done elsewhere (Anthony & Ord, 2008; De Cooman et al., 2007; Richardson et al., 2001; Richardson & Watt, 2005, 2006; Sharif et al., 2016; Watt & Richardson, 2007; Williams & Forgasz, 2009).

Personally rewarding factors, such as being remembered positively by

students, building a sense of community, or being a role model, remained relatively unchanged between initial and final data collection. How participants valued the nurturing of students showed only a slight increase in responses towards the conclusion of the program (Chapter 4, page 228). However, professional rewards, including engaging students, professional development, and collegial relationships had become far more important to pre-service teachers as they began to experience the relational elements of working in the school setting. Educating students was rated as far less rewarding by comparison as the importance of relationships dominated participants' experiences. This was further emphasised by participants where they highlighted that the demands of the workplace were significant but that these were made more manageable by those around them (B. Johnson & Down, 2012; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, & Hunter, 2010). In these ways, the participants reiterated their need for the rewards that come from teaching that largely connected with interpersonal ones (Morrison, 2013a, 2013b). They valued the outcomes associated with close personal and professional relationships and feeling that they impacted others in positive ways (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011).

The underpinning personal philosophies of teaching held by participants (supported by images of themselves enacting the teaching role) were affirmed in these ways in the classroom. The school and institutional context shaped their experiences. The relationships forged with the CT's, the CT's relationship with other staff (whether they enjoyed positive and supportive collegial relationships themselves), the nature of the school culture and the acceptance of the pre-service teacher by the school

community contributed to the perception of success in the school setting. In schools where pre-service teachers were nurtured and supported by CT's, challenging aspects such as 'stage fright' were diminished or momentary in the course of the PE program. These pre-service teachers were regularly rewarded with support to navigate this phase through the resources and supports made available to them. For this cohort then, realistic perceptions of teaching were a product of their engagement with teachers around them. Successful PE experiences therefore served as an affirmation for their choice to teach and a measure of their suitability for and likely future success in the profession.

### 7.5 Participants constant recalibration of self as teacher

The participants' perceptions and perspectives continually emphasised that once the decision to enter ITE was made they were committed to making personal and professional adjustments to ensure that the venture was successful. Participants reported some initial anxiety about their decision to leave another career to return to full-time study. This anxiety was expressed more as an acknowledgment of risk, yet inclusive of a hopefulness that they had made the right decision. The continued reflection upon the decision to teach allowed pre-service teachers to reveal the contextual, personal and professional issues that led to changing perceptions and in doing so, address the fourth research question of the study.

Participants offset these concerns with a justification that their decision to pursue teaching was the career that they felt they were meant to have. There was an inherent commitment to a successful outcome but an awareness of the gravity of their choices. Participants spoke of their careful

consideration to the timing of their new venture to improve the likely outcomes. Pre-service teachers such as Sophie planned for success well before actual enrolment. Sophie's careful consideration and patient wait to enter her program at a specific time was strategic. By commencing her ITE program at the start of the year rather than through a mid-year intake, she felt that she would not feel out of step with other pre-service teachers. She sought to follow the same timetable as the majority of the cohort and ensure that she would be able to build working relationships with her peers in each of her classes, thereby surrounding herself with support.

### 7.5.1 Adjusting to fit the profession

Just as a pilot adjusts the flight path of the aeroplane throughout the journey to reach the destination, so too did these career-change pre-service teachers. The destination of becoming a teacher, contributing to the wider community and obtaining meaning and purpose through their work were metaphorically on their radar and they made continual adjustments throughout their program. They wanted to feel that what they did mattered beyond themselves and gave something of substance to others and society, adding weight to altruistic factors being a significant motivator (De Cooman et al., 2007; Thomson & Palermo, 2014). This search for meaning and purpose was held as the fixed end-point of the career-change. This was immovable and non-negotiable, so they continued to adjust themselves instead. This meant making subtle but important changes within their own lives, including but not limited to previous careers, relocating for study or accepting a reduction in income. Change was also evident in their perceptions of each new experience and to connect these to the need to remain on course to reach their destination.

## 7.6 Developing self-efficacy

### 7.6.1 Grappling with the complex nature of teachers' work

Increasing workload and intensification, organisational and administrative demands and complex relational load, introduce a range of additional stressors to the teaching context for graduate teachers (Abbott-Chapman et al., 2001; Easthope & Easthope, 2000, 2007; Forgasz & Leder, 2006; Gu & Day, 2013; Hargreaves, 1990; B. Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, et al., 2010). Such stress factors impact levels of teacher stress and burnout and subsequently teacher attrition (Boe et al., 2006; Fan, 2017; R. Gardner, 2010; Giallo & Little, 2003; König & Rothland, 2012; O'Brien et al., 2008; Thomson & Palermo, 2014). These are the "seeds of non-retention" (p. 67) that are sown early in a teacher's career (Rhodes, Nevill, et al., 2004). Some researchers recognise the constant 'bombardment' (Williamson & Myhill, 2008) of political concerns that exacerbate teacher stress and suggest that for many, teaching is "simply too complex" (Lederman & Lederman, 2015, p. 1). Such complexity and scrutiny challenges pre-service and graduate teachers in ways that impact on the perceived inducements of the profession and influence their decisions about how to respond to (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Boe et al., 2006; Buchanan et al., 2013; Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll et al., 2012; Ryan et al., 2017; Willis, Crosswell, Morrison, Gibson, & Ryan, 2017).

Easthope and Easthope (2000) argued that teachers commit to the humanistic values of teaching regardless of the associated challenges. They also recognise that this cost often comes as reduced satisfaction in the role. Despite this, the participants here demonstrated a commitment to teaching. This commitment is often closely connected to teacher self-

efficacy (Flores et al., 2004). This commitment is often most tested during early career teaching and due to the increased pressures of transitioning into new roles, learning new accountabilities, assuming new responsibilities and coming to terms with new expectations (B. Johnson et al., 2014). This transition from pre-service to graduate teacher is often described as a period of "survival" (Lang, 2001, p. 2) rather than transition (Huberman, 1993; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011).

For the participants, constant revisiting, recalibrating and reaffirming of their motivations to become teachers occurred as a result of exposure to each new component of their ITE program (e.g., theoretical units, PE placements). Final questionnaire and post-PE interviews revealed the changes in perceptions and enhanced understandings of the pre-service teachers. As they progressed through their program, sought to enact who they sought to be. They did this with other teachers, through other teachers' and as a result of identification from other teachers. The importance of this constant recalibration cannot be understated as this affirmed their commitment to future goals and management of complex experiences.

### 7.6.2 Refining an uncertain image of self as teacher

Participants frequently used terms such as approachable, knowledgeable, kind, energetic and fun to explain the concept of a quality teacher. Importantly, they saw themselves as developing these dispositions for teaching. Nevertheless, these concepts of self took time to crystalise. For example, early in their program they experienced some difficulty

imagining themselves as teachers. Emma explained "I can't see myself standing in front of a classroom of children…I don't have a picture of myself standing in front of the classroom" (Pre-PE, First-year). Similarly, Judy was delaying her judgment until she had undertaken her first PE placement before articulating an image of herself in the classroom. She shared, "Well, I haven't got to the stage of [imagining] what I would be like yet because we still haven't gone to our pracs " (Pre-PE, First-year). These perceptions of themselves striving to be competent to teach but acknowledging they had much to learn first was a significant theme throughout the data. They continually acknowledged the challenges of developing teacher knowledge and competency but did not allow how they currently perceived themselves to deter them from pursuing their goals. Despite concerns and anxiety about their own performance from time to time, their desire to feel what they did had value beyond themselves and that their contribution to others and society remained an important motivator.

These motivations to teach (De Cooman et al., 2007; Thomson & Palermo, 2014) served as a resource for the participants to find themselves along the way and see themselves in the way they saw other teachers. There was a crystalisation of their self concept as they neared program completion. They shared images of the types of classroom climates they wished to create and how they would be as a teacher with their students. They didn't just adopt the teacher identity but rather crystallised how they "will be for and with others" (Bullough, 2005, p. 144). Further, their school-based PE provided experiences enhanced understandings of the complexities of teaching that are essential in the formation of professional identity for

pre-service teachers (Cattley, 2007; Zembylas, 2003) and allowed for creative responses to new situations (Marble, 2012).

### 7.6.3 Perceived professional efficacy strengthened their commitment to teaching

As these participants progressed through their ITE program, they emphasised that having a high level of efficacy in the teaching role not only affirmed their decision to teach but also strengthened their commitment to their new career. Many of these participants entered into their ITE program sure in their belief that they would be embarking on the career they felt they were meant to have and that their success in this venture was critical. Although they had realistic yet rudimentary perceptions of the classroom context, it was their focus on rewarding aspects of the profession that sustained them, along with a belief that they possessed the capacity to successfully contribute to the lives of others through their teaching.

### 7.6.4 Recurring perceptions of reward

Participants continually highlighted what they perceived as the rewarding aspects of teaching throughout all data collection instruments over the duration of the B. Teach program. These rewards clustered around consistent themes with four categories emerging: *Professionally rewarding* (collegial relationships, holidays, student engagement), *Personally rewarding* (being accepted by students, fun, making a difference), *Educating students* (student focussed learning, student outcomes, instilling

a love of learning) *and Nurturing students* (positively impacting on children's lives, meeting children's needs, empowering students).

Analysis of initial and final questionnaire data revealed the prominence of the same four categories at both data collection points, however, a shift in emphasis gave insight to the changing source of reward for the participants. When asked: *What do you consider to be the three most attractive or rewarding aspects of teaching?* (Chapter 4, page 228) there was a notable reduction in the perceived rewards of *Educating students,* accompanied by a steep increase in the value placed upon *Professional rewards* (Travel, Ethical employment, Job security, Professional development). Initially, pre-service teachers focused on the intrinsic and altruistic rewards of contributing to a knowledgeable community, instilling a love of learning in others, developing students academically, and encouraging student achievement, as being the most rewarding aspects of teaching. Although these rewards remained important, through the experience of working with students during ITE, participants demonstrated a shift towards *Professional rewards* and the importance they held. The shift away from (or perhaps the reconstitution of) the rewards associated with others to rewards associated with teaching. The value of strong supportive and collegial relationships and the opportunity to develop their own professional learning were emphasised as more rewarding than originally reported.

A motivation to know more about learning and specifically learn more about the practice of teaching emerged as a significant factor in how these career-change pre-service teachers consolidated their understandings of teachers, the teaching role and also their place within it.

These pre-service teachers identified Professional Development (PD) or Professional Learning (PL) as an important factor which sustained their motivation for entering the teaching profession. They described PD as the key to their professional growth and significant in their confidence. Related to their high-stakes decision to leave their previous career and to enter teaching, the success of this venture was connected to ongoing learning that could strengthen their practice and performance in the classroom. Ongoing targetted PD was perceived to be important to them in acquiring the required competencies that would see growth in competency and an increased sense of professional self efficacy.

## 7.7 Participants enduring beliefs about themselves as teachers

### 7.7.1 Professional experience consolidates commitment

Throughout the data, participants continually emphasised previously discussed motivations for choosing to teach. Although their drivers were shared as unique to themselves, they were common across the cohort with their peers. The intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic drivers were equally characteristic of those reported in the literature (Anthony & Ord, 2008; Hennessy & Lynch, 2017; Richardson & Watt, 2006; Williams & Forgasz, 2009). These motivators underpinned somewhat of a psychological contract they had constructed with their new profession. Those participants present at the conclusion of their ITE program, demonstrated a deepening and strengthening conviction to their decision to teach. They were determined to fulfil their commitment and this had led to a range of expectations that they felt that they would receive in return. These expectations were developed well before enrolment into ITE but were nuanced and influenced by elements of their ITE program.

What became apparent from these recounts from the career-change pre-service teachers was that their self-perceptions were becoming more nuanced, sharper in focus and central in the beliefs about their alignment with teaching. What motivated them to become a pre-service teacher remained and resonated through the rewarding intrinsic and altruistic experiences in the classroom. So sure were they that their initial decision to enter teaching was the right one that the perceived challenges were acknowledged and accepted. They spoke about their new careers in terms of longevity. They talked about their future contributions to teaching over sustained periods and reflected on the quality of their work and life during that time. They reminded themselves that they were at the very beginning of this career and although they were committed and sure, they were also hopeful that their plans would be fulfilled, as Sophie emphasised;

> Personally for me with teaching I feel reward. I have always felt reward…personal satisfaction is what I think most about teaching…in the bigger scheme of my actual life is that…when I'm old, and if I can do this and I do enjoy it and I am successful, I will look back on it and feel like I've made a difference.
>
> (Sophie, Pre-PE, First-year)

By the conclusion of the B. Teach ITE program, these career-change pre-service teachers had developed more measured and sophisticated perceptions of themselves as teachers and more broadly of the teaching profession. These perceptions were informed by their evolving but persistent priorities to live a life of meaning and purpose and to contribute positively to the lives of others. These perceptions reinforced and affirmed their motivations and decision to teach. Their strong drivers and commitment to improving their own lives through a career change to

teaching pushed them to seek opportunities to develop the required competencies of their new professional work and to build their self efficacy in the profession.

### 7.7.2 Challenges and rewards: Teacher professional identity work as a source of momentum

Participant responses revealed that the impact of PE placements seemed to create uncertainty about their ability to progress their one's career beyond the classroom (Chapter 4. Page 159.) They observed that few leadership roles were available in Tasmanian schools. A common observation by the participants was that such roles were occupied by those that had 'earned their stripes' in the classroom and would not be available to them for some time beyond graduation if at all. The exception to this was graduate teachers which were prepared to work in remote, hard-to-staff schools or understaffed curriculum areas. In these cases, opportunities were available for rapid progression that could fast-track their developing career over those who obtained work in highly desirable metropolitan sites where they would be required to compete with more experienced teachers.

The personal investments made by these participants cannot be underestimated. The seminal work by Nias (1989) highlighted how teaching underwrites the shaping of the person as they construct their professional identity. Interpersonal relationships with students and the contextual influences impact the emerging understandings of the self. These participants, showed this to be true and highlighted how this served to overcome the challenge of learning to teach.

"Teacher professional identity can be regarded as those characteristics which define a teacher and which simultaneously differentiate a teacher from a member of a different profession" (Pietsch & Williamson, 2005, p. 365). These authors go on to say that the elements of teacher identity incorporate teacher decision-making, practice, beliefs, ideals, and values. It becomes a way of describing a teacher's perception of self that drives behaviours and informs practices in and outside of the school setting (Morrison, 2013b; Pietsch & Williamson, 2005; Walkington, 2005; Williams, 2010). Although some researchers have argued that the purpose of ITE is to construct teachers' professional identity (van Huizen, van Oers, & Wubbels, 2005), others assert that pre-service teachers tend to not identify as teachers or as members of the professional community until employed in a school (Thomson & Palermo, 2014), although the journey to becoming a teacher commences well before this either of these career stages.

Developing an understanding of self is critical to becoming and being a teacher (Bullough, 2005) and this was acutely apparent within the cohort. For these participants, it was not just a matter of enacting a professional identity, but determining how they will fit with teaching (Bullough, 2005). Their transition to teaching did not reveal the assuming of an identity nor duplicating accepted teacher behaviours; instead, it involved the creative responding to unfamiliar situations and relationships that classrooms and school contexts present (Marble, 2012). This reflected a maturing appreciation for the complexity of teaching necessary for professional identity formation for pre-service teachers (Cattley, 2007; Zembylas, 2003) and career entry.

## 7.8 Summary

This chapter has emphasised the importance of identified the demographic and preferential profiles of the participating pre-service teachers enrolled in the B. Teach program at the University of Tasmania. It has highlighted the personal and professional aspirations of these pre-service teachers and presented an understanding of who they were and how they arrived and progressed through their ITE. The variety of participants' extrinsic, intrinsic and altruistic motivators and their deeply personal and philosophical drivers for creating change in their lives and the lives of others were dominant. Once enrolled in the B. Teach program, their realistic but rudimentary perceptions of teaching were shaped through constant recalibrations of themselves. Their need to be successful in this endeavour and to ensure that their investments were fruitful. Their enduring beliefs about the nature of teachers' work, their motivations to teach and their place within the profession was sustained throughout, their preparation reaffirming their decision to enrol in ITE and their ongoing commitment to make it personally and professionally profitable.

# Chapter 8

# Implications and recommendations

## 8.1 Introduction

This final chapter presents the key insights that were determined from the two years spent with the participants of this study. The implications for educational research, for professional practice and educational policy are drawn from the data and the narratives of the career-change pre-service teachers themselves. Recommendations are offered that reflect the needs of the education stakeholders and propose future collaborations that address the needs of pre-service teachers and move the profession forward.

## 8.2 Delimitations

As a PhD research investigation, constraints of time and available resources impacted upon the methodology. As such, the University of Tasmania, Launceston campus site was chosen on the basis of its convenient proximity to the researcher's workplace and the availability of, and geographical and logistical access to the participants for data collection. The selection of participants was limited to an opportunity sample (Burns, 2000). The researcher was aware that

the pre-service teachers' workload at the time was likely to affect the response rate of the participants. This study was undertaken prior to a period of significant change in the national agenda regarding education policy and although the researcher can confidently discuss the data, caution is taken when extrapolating findings to the wider community.

## 8.3 Implications

The findings of this study have direct implications for educational research, professional practice and educational policy.

### 8.3.1 Implications for educational research

The findings of this study have implications for a greater understanding of workforce profiles and workforce capacity. A deep knowledge of the preferences and intentions of career-change, or indeed all pre-service teachers, for their own lives and careers, provides insight for workforce planning as well as ITE for career-change preservice teachers. Preferences regarding curriculum areas, geographical locations, and teaching levels are particularly important for workforce planning and determining the capacity of the workforce to fill the requirements of the employers. For employers to identify and predict where teacher shortages currently and will occur, and to work in partnership with ITE providers to actively recruit and build capacity in required areas, is of vital importance, particularly in the Tasmanian context where a single ITE provider physically resides.

By understanding the motivations and drivers that pre-service teachers have for entering the teaching profession, recruitment and selection efforts may be better targeted and more attractive inducements offered. Knowing where career-change pre-service teachers arrive from, their previous fields of study or employment will allow for the creative development of programs either in

partnership with or independent of, other degrees or alternative pathways into teaching. Active recruitment and rigorous selection not only satisfies the current requirements of the government's response to ITE changes in Australia (TEMAG, 2015), it ensures the ongoing supply of 'classroom ready' teachers in a profession impacted by high attrition (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Boe et al., 2006; Buchanan et al., 2013; R. Gardner, 2010; Ingersoll et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2013; McKenzie, Weldon, Rowley, Murphy, & McMillan, 2014; Weldon, 2015).

A greater understanding of the factors that lead to the pushes and pulls for entering teaching, such as seeking meaning and purpose through their work, is vital to understanding what incoming pre-service teachers value, what motivates them and what sustains them. The mapping of their preferences and intentions over the course of their program provides some insight into the growth, development, and change that occurs through the integration of theory and practice in ITE. What is needed is the continued mapping of intentions beyond graduation as the realities of the profession shapes the beginning teaching experience. Determination of the challenges and rewards experienced in the first five years, where most attrition occurs (Long et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2013), could provide the data needed to make changes to program, design to better prepare graduates for the trials ahead. Understanding the development of how professional identity is constructed, how pre-service and graduate teachers re-imagine their role as a teacher and how stakeholders such as school leader's, mentors or principals can support them, has implications for retention (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Long et al., 2012; Morrison, 2013a, 2013b; T. Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). So too does it have implications for ITE design and delivery that leads to successful outcomes in the realities of the workplace.

Extended research opportunities with employers that allow for the ongoing mapping of graduate teachers allows for the identification of graduates who experience a fractured (relief or short-term contracts) start to their teaching

career, those that find themselves teaching out-of-field or other employment-based contexts that may place graduates at risk of attrition. Identification of graduates and the implementation of intervention programs could disrupt the employment churn of graduate teachers from the profession.

### 8.3.2 Implications for professional practice

The findings of this study have implications for professional practice through a deeper understanding of the specific needs of career-change pre-service teachers and graduates. The findings also emphasise the critical importance and impact of the Professional Experience school placement in the preparation of classroom-ready teachers, as well as the need for the creation of opportunities for graduate teachers.

Understanding the specific needs of the career-change teachers allows for the explicit design of the targeted professional development or professional learning that supports and sustains these graduate teachers. Their commitment to the profession and desire to pursue lengthy careers is strong however, it demands ongoing mentorship and support. They strive for a feeling of efficacy and seek to demonstrate competency in the classroom. They identify their own areas of deficit, or areas of teaching that they feel they were underprepared for through ITE, and seek to strengthen their practice through continuous learning.

Ongoing data collection from graduate teachers that identifies and communicates their needs based on the lived classroom experience of beginning teaching, is essential for the improvement of ITE programs. The Professional Experience school placement is a well-documented period of rapid growth and deepening understanding of professional practice for all pre-service teachers. For these career-changers, PE served to contextualise their learning, make visible their future learning needs and strengthened their resolve in their decision to

teach. The implications of which is the need to make PE the epicentre of the ITE experience. A strong colleague teacher guidance and improved mechanisms for identifying and communicating with the ITE provider, pre-service teachers areas of need would strengthen and improve the quality of the PE experience and enhance the dedication and efficacy of the graduate.

The findings of this study revealed the commitment to the profession these career-change pre-service teachers, those present at the end of program, possessed. Their desire to be 'classroom ready' and to embrace all and every opportunity to gain employment make them a highly motivated and committed employee. The creating of opportunities that capitalise on the commitment to teaching that the career change graduate demonstrates is paramount to retaining these valuable contributors to the teaching workforce. Opportunities for internships, employment contracts or ideally, probationary permanent positions after graduation ensure that these graduates begin their careers in a way that supports success. A fractured start to teaching demoralises graduates and the declining sense of efficacy and hopefulness they once held for their career is diminished along with their commitment (Pietsch & Williamson, 2005). The opportunity to practice and hone their skills early to build competency and confidence has direct implications for their efficacy and capacity in the classroom.

### 8.3.3 Implications for educational policy

The findings of this study have implications that extend to educational policy. The process of teacher selection, development of alternative programs, the recognition of professional assets and the identification of shared goals are shaped by educational policy.

Data from this study, through the identification of the demographic features of the career-change pre-service teachers, provides insight for teacher selection and

recruitment. For example, the identification that 60% of career change pre-service teachers in this study transitioned from The Arts sector, is of particular interest for recruitment and ITE. Working with stakeholders and industry partners to embed in educational policy, processes that recognise the complexities of career-change pre-service teachers as they recruit and select future teachers is crucial.

Initial education providers and employers are best placed to identify and meet the needs of both the workforce and specifically the career-change pre-service teachers and graduates. An educational policy that recognises the shared goals of these stakeholders and secures partnership agreements that enhance the profession through research and data collection is critical. Policies that allow for ongoing collaboration that results in a greater understanding of the workforce and their needs are not only mutually beneficial but should recognise the resource and professional asset that career-changers are, the value of their life experience and commitment to the endeavour of teaching.

## 8.4 Recommendations

### 8.4.1 Data collection that informs the profession (Recommendation 1)

This study focussed attention on the need to continue to develop extensive data sets that track the graduates across a number of measures and in all sectors, in an ongoing longitudinal way. Data that document demographic information at entry and exit points of ITE, graduate employment contexts and retention or attrition from the profession would provide information critical for workforce planning. Partnership agreements that allow for the collection of data, at the system level, pertaining to teachers changing understandings, perceptions, and beliefs about teaching in relation to their employment contexts and experience, would provide invaluable information for the preparation of graduate teachers and the mechanisms that assist to sustain them. The development of an annual

teacher 'health check' survey would inform not only workplace planning but also allow for the targeted support of the graduate and experienced teacher as well as assist in the identification of their perceived needs.

### 8.4.2 Working in partnership (Recommendation 2)

The narratives of the participants and the findings of this study demonstrate the need for an approach from educational stakeholders (ITE providers, employers and registration bodies), as a professional collective, to support graduates and their outcomes. Working together through research opportunities that allow for a deepened understanding of graduate and experienced teachers' professional lives, will greatly enhance stakeholders ability to meet the ongoing and changing needs of professional teachers. Working in partnership would allow for targeted recruitment and selection into ITE, support, and preparation for the profession by providers with the view to meet the needs of the registration bodies and the workforce. The significant role that ITE providers play in the ongoing support of teachers beyond graduation and in the provision of professional learning is currently underestimated and underutilised. An effective partnership, where higher education is considered part of the continuum from early learning to Grade 12 would promote engagement and raise student outcomes. This would be a mutually beneficial partnership that retains 'classroom ready' graduates in a dynamic and rewarding profession.

### 8.4.3 Incorporating pre-service teacher perspectives into course design (Recommendation 3)

This study has emphasised the significant consideration and evaluation of career viability that occurs within the lives of pre-service teachers, with the intent to secure a teaching future. This collective activity represents an invaluable resource for teacher educators to draw on to better understand and therefore shape the experiences of pre-service teachers and prioritise appropriate offerings that

support traction and nurture the perceived rewards that are inherent in the ITE phase. Exploring ways to create flexibility within ITE programs, particularly for those career-change pre-service teachers, to promote career viability is essential. Utilising what is now known about the motivations of individuals to choose to teach and what sustains them in their career, to inform course design and collaborative ways of working with prospective teachers, could enhance both recruitment and retention within ITE programs and promote career longevity.

## 8.5 Summary

This chapter concludes the thesis and has presented the findings of the study in relation to the overarching research aim to explore the preconceptions, understandings and beliefs regarding the teaching profession held by pre-service teachers. Further, to investigate the effect of theoretical knowledge and Professional Experience on the pre-service teachers' perceived preparedness for classroom teaching. The study also examined any shift in perception regarding the teaching profession and the contextual, personal and professional factors that may have contributed to any change in perception experienced as they progress through their initial teacher education program. The study has given due consideration to the insights revealed by the analysed data and in doing so addressed the four Research Questions. It has defined career-change pre-service teachers in a dynamic contemporary context and recognised career-changers as a significant contributor to the teaching workforce.

The opportunity and the challenge for the professional learning communities that surround pre-service and graduate teachers are to pay attention to the valuable perceptions that they hold and their motivations to teach in ways that enable them to realise their aspirations. As a result, this study highlights the need for us to recognise the potential within career-change graduate teachers to find meaning and purpose and for this to be significant for the teaching workforce as a whole. By attending to the needs of this important source of future teachers,

the implications are evident for educational research, professional practice and the development of educational policy. This chapter has offered recommendations for further research and future action.

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# Appendices

This thesis concludes with the presentation of documents relevant to the conduct of the study and appendices. Appendices are presented as follows:

Appendix A: Information sheet (Bachelor of Teaching students)

Appendix B: Statement of Informed Consent (Bachelor of Teaching students)

Appendix C: Stage 1 Initial Questionnaire

Appendix D: Interview schedules

Appendix E: Classroom observation guide for researcher

Appendix F: Weekly journal

Appendix G: Stage 3 Final Questionnaire

Appendix H: Transcript sample

**Appendix A:** Information sheet (Bachelor of Teaching students)

## Information Sheet (Bachelor of Teaching Students)



Dear Colleague,

We are writing to invite you to participate in a research project entitled '*The Beginning Teaching Experience – A Study of the Changing Career Expectations and Required Competencies of Beginning Teachers*'.

The proposed research project, will endeavor, first, to explore the initial perceptions of a number of pre-service teacher education students about what being a classroom teacher encompasses and their professional aspirations; second, to follow these students as they progress through their teacher preparation and ultimately when they commence their first teaching experience to map how their perceptions may have changed and third, to investigate the nature of the contextual, personal and professional issues that may have lead to the changing perceptions.

Information gathered in this study has the potential to guide the development of future policies and procedures to include the necessary preparation and support structures for beginning teachers so that they emerge from the University and enter into the dynamic teaching profession confident that they have had the best preparation to teach and with a certainty of their professional identity. In addition, by understanding and accommodating the special needs of this group of beginning professionals may assist to better prepare them for their chosen profession and subsequently retain them.

We wish to gather data from beginning teachers in three stages:

**Stage 1 -** All Launceston based Bachelor of Teaching students in both the first and second year of the course will be invited to complete a Questionnaire designed to gather information about who you are as a group and your current perceptions and expectations of classroom teaching as a career.

**Stage 2** - We would like approximately fifteen members of this group to participate in stage 2. This stage involves three face-to-face (audio-taped) interviews. The first interview will be conducted prior to you having experienced classroom teaching, the second during your first practicum experience, and the third after all practicum requirements for your course have been completed. If you choose to participate in this stage of the study you will also be asked to keep a daily log during the practicum experience to help track your thoughts and feelings in response to the personal and professional demands of teaching. You

will also be observed on one occasion in the classroom during a teaching session in conjunction with the usual field observation conducted by the University.
**Stage 3** – To conclude the data collection for the study, all Launceston based Bachelor of Teaching students will be invited to complete a follow-up questionnaire at the conclusion of their practicum experience. Your responses will provide a before and after picture of the changing perceptions of beginning teachers.

There are four members of the research team. Ms Michelle Hinds, who will make contact with participants who have given their consent to participate in the project, conduct interviews and classroom observations. Ms Hinds will also undertake preliminary analysis and reporting of the project as the project forms the basis of a PhD study.

Prof John Williamson, Dr Robin Wills and Dr Marion Myhill have worked with Ms Hinds during the design phase of the project. The final data analysis and writing will be completed with the collaboration of the entire research team.

If you agree to participate in any aspect of the study, you are requested to complete and sign the Informed Consent Form attached to this letter after any questions you have about the project and your potential participation in an interview have been answered to your satisfaction. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please note that there are minimal questions, among those you will be asked, that might allow identification of individual participants such as gender and background. However, if you choose to participate in Stage 2 of the study an identification and contact details sheet needs to be completed and remain attached to your questionnaire. This is necessary for comparison with Stage 3 questionnaire responses. If you agree to complete a questionnaire, log/journal or to participate in an interview you are entitled to decline to comment on any of the items.

Information provided in this study will not be used or reported in a manner that allows identification of individuals. Only the two researchers, Prof John Williamson and Michelle Hinds will have access to the collected data. Real names of participants will not be kept with interview data. Any computer files created during the project will not be stored on any of the researchers' computers once the project had been completed: files will be copied to CD-ROM for secure storage in one of the researchers' offices and destroyed after five years.

As with all involvement in research studies, your participation in the study is voluntary. Please note that your participation is not part of course requirements, and declining to participate will not adversely affect your academic performance. If you decide to participate and subsequently wish to withdraw, you can do so without any penalty or prejudice. Furthermore, if you choose to participate in an interview you can withdraw while the interview is occurring and also withdraw any identifiable data you have provided.

If you have any concerns or complaints about any aspect of the study, you may contact the Executive Officer of the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network from which ethical approval to conduct this study (reference H9170) has been obtained: Executive Officer: Ms Marilyn Pugsley (Tel. 6226 7479).

If you have any questions regarding the study, please direct these to Ms Hinds or Professor Williamson (contact details below). The researchers would be pleased to supply you with a summary of the research findings should you wish.

Thank you for considering your participation in the study.

Yours sincerely

John Williamson
Chief Investigator

John.Williamson@utas.edu.au
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Fax: 6324 3903

Michelle Hinds
PhD Investigator

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**Appendix B:** Statement of Informed Consent (Bachelor of Teaching students)

## Statement of Informed Consent (Bachelor of Teaching Students)

**Title of Project:** '*The Beginning Teaching Experience – A Study of the Changing Career Expectations and Required Competencies of Beginning Teachers'.*

1. I have read and understood the 'Information Sheet' for this study.
2. The nature of the study has been explained to me.
3. I understand that the study is comprised of three stages. Stage 1 and Stage 3 involve the completion of a questionnaire. I understand that Stage 2 consists of three face-to-face, audio-taped, interviews. I also understand that Stage 2 will include the researcher observing me in the classroom during my practicum, and me keeping a log during that time. I understand the study is longitudinal and data collection will extend over the academic year 2007.
4. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania premises for five years, and thereafter destroyed.
5. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
6. I agree that research data gathered from me for the study may be published provided that I cannot be identified as a participant.
7. I understand that the researchers will maintain my identity as a participant in the study confidential and that any information I supply to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research.
8. I understand that if I agree to participate in this investigation I may withdraw at any time without any effect, and if I so wish, may request that any identifiable data I have supplied to date be withdrawn from the research.

| **Statement by Investigator** | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation | | |
| If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked. | | |
| ☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet in which my details have been provided so that participants have had opportunity to contact me prior to them consenting to participate in this project. | | |
| Names of Investigators | Prof. John Williamson | Ms Michelle Hinds |
| Signatures of Investigators | | |

**Appendix C**: Stage 1 Initial Questionnaire

## Stage 1. *Questionnaire - Bachelor of Teaching Students*

## Part A - About you.

For each question please answer in the space provided or tick the box where appropriate.

1. What is your gender? Male ☐ Female ☐

2. What is your age?
- 20 - 25 years ☐
- 26 - 30 years ☐
- 31 - 35 years ☐
- 36 - 40 years ☐
- > 40 years ☐

3. Prior to your enrolment in the Bachelor of Teaching Degree at the University of Tasmania, what was the highest level of educational qualification you had completed?
- Trade certificate ☐
- Bachelor Degree ☐
- Graduate Diploma ☐
- Other ☐ Please specify _____

4. In what field of study did you obtain your highest qualification?
For example: Plumbing, History, Child Care. _____

5. Where do you intend to teach?
Please tick all that apply.
- Tasmania ☐
- Mainland ☐
- Overseas ☐

6. Which level do you intend to teach?
Please tick all that apply.
- Early childhood ☐
- Lower primary ☐
- Middle Primary ☐
- Upper Primary ☐
- Secondary ☐
- College/11 & 12 ☐
- TAFE ☐

7. Do you have a specialist area?
- No ☐
- Yes ☐ Please specify _____

8. What type of school do you hope to secure employment?
- Urban/City ☐
- Rural ☐
- Isolated ☐

9. In what Educational system do you hope to secure employment?

- State ☐
- Catholic Systemic ☐
- Independent ☐

## Part B - Perceptions and Beliefs

For each question please tick the appropriate box.

| *Based on your current understanding, please indicate your agreement with the following statements?* | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 I am fully aware of the current rate of pay for teachers | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2 I am fully aware of the opportunity for professional development in the teaching profession | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3 I am able to use my teaching qualifications to easily obtain work overseas, should I choose to | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4 I am fully aware of the level of stability and job security of the teaching profession | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5 I am fully aware of the opportunity to advance my career beyond the role of the classroom teacher | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6 I am well informed regarding the prospects of obtaining a full time teaching position shortly after graduation | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7 I am well informed regarding the prospects of obtaining casual/relief teaching work shortly after graduation | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8 I am fully aware of the support structures available for beginning teachers, such as counseling and mentoring programs | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 9 I have a clear understanding of the general opinion in the wider community of the teaching profession | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 10 I have a clear understanding of the 'social status' of teachers in the wider community | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 11 Do you have, or intend to have, children? | Yes ☐ ⇨ *Go to question 12* | | | | |
| | No ☐ ⇨ *Go to question 15* | | | | |

*Please indicate how important the following factors were to you when deciding to enter the teaching profession.*

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 The potential for teaching to provide work hours that are compatible with my child care needs is very important to me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 13 It is very important to me that teaching will allow me to take my children to work' when they reach school age | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 14 The potential for teaching to provide me with a thorough understanding of the education system so that I may assist my own children to succeed academically, is very important to me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 Having approximately 12 weeks paid holidays per year is very important to me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

*Please indicate how important the following factors were to you when deciding to enter the teaching profession.*

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 Teaching will provide me with a substantial income and good work conditions | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 17 Teaching will provide me with the opportunity to work with children | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 18 Teaching will allow me to be instrumental in helping children to succeed | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 19 Teaching will allow me to share knowledge and encourage learning | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 20 Teaching will allow me to be a positive role model for the children that I have contact with | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 21 Teaching will allow me to provide stability and guidance to children that might not otherwise have this in their lives | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 22 As a student I had a teacher who inspired me and I wanted to contribute to the lives of others in the same way | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

*Please indicate your current perception of the following aspects of teaching and how challenging you think you will find them during your teaching experience.*

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 23 Developing teaching programs and interpreting the curriculum will be very challenging for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 24 Understanding the required process of assessing students will be very difficult for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 25 Reporting to parents in writing and conducting parent-teacher interviews will be very challenging for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 26 Planning and programming for students with disabilities will be very difficult for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 27 Teaching students with disabilities in an inclusive classroom will be very challenging for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| | Strongly | | | | Strongly |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 28 Planning and programming for gifted and talented students will be very difficult for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 29 Mandatory reporting of child welfare concerns will be very challenging for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 30 Dealing with potential medical emergencies such as accidents or anaphylactic attacks (severe allergic reactions) will be very difficult for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 31 Maintaining the workload required to provide quality teaching will be very challenging for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 32 Increasing class sizes will be difficult to manage | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 33 Maintaining positive relationships with other staff will be very challenging for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 34 Maintaining positive relationships with parents will be very difficult for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 35 Maintaining positive relationships with students will be very challenging for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 36 Managing students behaviour will be very difficult for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 37 Managing the behaviour of students with diagnosed conditions such as ADD or ADHD will be very challenging for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 38 Dealing with violent parents or violent students will be very difficult for me | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

## Part C - Open ended Reponses

For each question, please respond in the space provided.

1 What do you consider to be the three most challenging aspects of teaching?

2 What do you consider to be the most attractive or rewarding aspects of teaching?

3 Briefly describe what you think being a teacher will be like.

***Thank you for your participation***

**Appendix D:** Interview schedules

## *Initial Pre-PE Interview*

**Interview:** Face-to-Face

**Duration:** 30 – 45 minutes

**Recording of data:** Audio taped and note taking

**Style:** Interview will adopt a recursive style with a loosely guided structure (Burns, 1999).

**Guiding statements**

***Interview 1***

What motivated you to apply for the Bachelor of Teaching course?

Do you have a picture of what teaching will be like when you get into the schools? If you do, can you tell me some of the features?

What do you think the greatest challenge will be for you once you enter the classroom?

What knowledge and skills do you think are essential for you to be successful when you first begin to teach?

## *During PE Interview*

**Interview:** Face-to-Face

**Duration:** 30 – 45 minutes

**Recording of data:** Audio taped and note taking

**Style:** Interview will adopt a recursive style with a loosely guided structure (Burns, 1999).

**Guiding statements**

***Interview 2***

How are you finding your prac experience?

Is it what you expected?

In what way would you say it was as you expected or different?

Do you feel confident that you have the knowledge and skills to be teaching?

As you observe the culture and practice of teaching in situ, are there any areas that you feel you might need more training before you start teaching independently?

At our first interview together, you said that you expected……. to be your greatest challenge. How are you finding…… now that you are in the classroom?

During your classroom observations, have you noticed anything that you envisage will be challenging for you and, that you hadn't thought about before then?

## *Post-PE Interview*

**Interview:** Face-to-Face

**Duration:** 30 – 45 minutes

**Recording of data:** Audio taped and note taking

**Style:** Interview will adopt a recursive style with a loosely guided structure (Burns, 1999).

**Guiding statements**

***Interview 3***

In our first interview together, I asked you what you thought teaching would be like. You said……. Now that you have finished your practicum experience, do you still think the same or do you now think differently about teaching and what's involved?

How do you feel about the integration of theory and practice?

Now you have been on prac are there any areas of your preparation that you think could have been strengthened? Added? Removed?

How do you feel about your career choice now that you have virtually finished your Bachelor of Teaching?

Would you recommend teaching as a profession to others?

If you were invited to talk to a group of Year 12 students about teaching as a career, what would you highlight to them?

**Appendix E:** Classroom observation guide for researcher

## Classroom Observation Schedule

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Topic: _____ Time: _____

**Observation of Behaviours**

The behaviour will be 'ticked' when observed.

| Observed | Personal/Professional attributes | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| | Professional presentation | |
| | Observable enthusiasm | |
| | Use of initative | |
| | Rapport with students | |
| | Knowledge of subject matter | |
| | **Planning and teaching** | |
| | Thoroughness of planning | |
| | Motivational techniques and aids | |
| | Incorporation of IEP's | |
| | Uses a variety of communication techniques | |
| | Utilises classroom resources. | |
| | Appropriateness of activities | |
| | Awareness of student capabilities | |
| | Uses a variety of teaching strategies. | |
| | **Classroom management** | |
| | Preparation and use of resources | |
| | Purposeful involvement of all students | |
| | Effective use of time | |
| | Positive leadership role | |
| | Awareness and control of student behaviour | |
| | Balance of individual and group activities | |
| | Balance of student/teacher directed activities | |
| | Maintenance of work habits/routines | |
| | Insistence of desirable behaviour | |
| | Anticipation of potential behaviour problems | |
| | Clearly defined behaviour expectations | |

**General comments**

**Appendix F:** Weekly journal

# Weekly Journal

## Week ___

**Date: _____/_____/_____**

**What was most enjoyable about this week?**

_____

_____

_____

**What was most challenging about this week?**

_____

_____

_____

**Were there any unusual events or 'crises' this week?**

_____

_____

_____

**Were you required to attend any meetings or supervise any extra-curricular activities? Please specify.**

_____

_____

**How many hours did you spend on teaching/preparation/extra-curricular activities?**

**At School: _____hours**

**At home: _____hours**

**Signed _____**

**Appendix G:** Stage 3 Final Questionnaire

## Stage 3. *Questionnaire - Bachelor of Teaching Students*
## Part A - Theory to Practice Integration

In terms of your preparation for the classroom, how well do you feel your theory based learning prepared you for the following aspects of teaching?

| | | Strongly Disagree 1 | Disagree 2 | Neutral 3 | Agree 4 | Strongly Agree 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I have a good understanding of the requirements and processes for application to the Teachers Registration Board and the Dept of Education | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2 | I am fully aware of the protocols for character checks and prohibited persons legislation | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3 | I have a good understanding of the professional Code of Conduct document issued by the Dept of Education | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4 | I am fully aware of the support structures and programs available to me as a beginning teacher | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5 | I am well prepared to develop teaching programs and interpret the curriculum | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6 | I have a good understanding of the required process of student assessment | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7 | I am well prepared to report to parents in writing, and to conduct parent teacher interviews | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8 | I have a good understanding of planning and programming for students with disabilities | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 9 | I am well prepared to teach students with disabilities in an inclusive classroom | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 10 | I have a good understanding of planning and programming for gifted and talented students | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 11 | I am fully aware that students have accidents and medical needs such as diabetes or anaphylaxis and as a teacher I am part of their care | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 12 | I am fully aware that I have a duty of care for my students that includes child welfare issues | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 13 | I have been well equipped with skills which will assist me in maintaining positive relationships with other staff, parents and students | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 I have been well equipped with the skills to be able to manage the behaviourof my students successfully, including those with diagnosed conditions such as ADD or ADHD. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 15 I fully understand that the general public have certain expectations regarding the my professional and personal conduct as a teacher in our community | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

## Part B - You and the Teaching Profession

Please rank the following groups of statements in order of importance 1 - 4 (1 being most important and 4 being least important).

| **Group 1** | **Rank** |
|---|---|
| **a** Teaching will provide me with a regular income as well as funds for retirement | ☐ |
| **b** Teaching will provide work hours which meet my current, or future, child care needs | ☐ |
| **c** Teaching will allow me to be instrumental in helping children to succeed | ☐ |
| **d** Teaching is a 'nice' job that will allow me to work mostly indoors and in pleasant surroundings | ☐ |

| **Group 2** | **Rank** |
|---|---|
| **a** Teaching will allow me to travel and gain professional employment in most countries | ☐ |
| **b** Teaching will provide me with 12 weeks of paid holidays per year and more sick leave than most other jobs | ☐ |
| **c** As a teacher I can guide and encourage the children I teach to create a better society | ☐ |
| **d** Teaching will allow me to work fairly independently but still be part of a team | ☐ |

| **Group 3** | **Rank** |
|---|---|
| **a** Teaching provides me with job security | ☐ |
| **b** Teaching is family orientated and provides some flexibility for family needs i.e. carers leave | ☐ |
| **c** Teaching will allow me to provide stability and support to children who might not otherwise have this in their lives | ☐ |
| **d** Teaching provides flexibility in that each work day is different, I am exposed to interesting situations and events and I can express myself through my personal and professional style | ☐ |

## Part C - Your Thoughts

For each question please respond in the space provided.

1 What do you consider to be the three most challenging aspects of teaching?

2 What do you consider to be the most attractive or rewarding aspects of teaching?

3 Imagine that you are rewriting the Bachelor of Teaching program for the University of Tasmania. What areas of study would you expand or new topics you would include to better prepare beginning teachers such as yourself, for the reality of teaching? (You might consider areas that you feel would make you more competitive in the job market such as a first aid certificate, or topics such as conflict resolution or time management).

4 Please feel free to add other comments regarding your beginning teacher experience.

***Thank you for your participation in this study and we wish you every success in your new teaching career.***

**Appendix H:** Transcript sample

**SIMON – INTERVIEW 1**

**This is the first interview with Simon.**

**M = Michelle**

**S = Simon**

M Testing interview for Simon, today is the 3rd of August '07. Now for the interview I'll be using Simon as your pseudonym. So if I call you Simon don't be alarmed, I do know who you are. Well what we're doing is we're looking at a study, where we're speaking with teachers who have come into the B.Teach course so they've come from other career paths and they've decided that they're going to be teachers and we're talking about their motivations, what they think that's going to be like, what they think is going to be challenging and then we're going to follow them through after their prac and talk to them again and see if anything's changed, if it's what they thought it was going to be, yeah so that's what I, there's no wrong answers it's just basically your opinion about why you are here. So normally I just start by asking the B.Teach people, what motivated you to apply for the Bachelor of Teaching course.

S I have been out of the workforce for about I think nearly 12 years looking after family and whilst things were getting back on track I thought well it's time for me to look at something for myself and teaching had always been in the back of my mind but I wasn't sure how I'd go or how it would be but I knew to get back in the workforce I probably would have to do some re-training because in the last 10 or 12 years there's been I think huge changes in the workforce completely

M Now I see on your survey that the one that we did back in February that you're a Fitter and Turner is it

S Yes, yes that was my apprenticeship, trade, yes

M Did you work in that industry

S I did, after I finished my apprenticeship I probably worked around it if you like rather than directly in it because I went into, I did a night course in diesel mechanics so I guess it's related but similar work so I was in the industry but I played around in mining and then I went farming for two years as an employee, tractor driving so it was different although I was brought up on a farm so it wasn't that different and I think in the 80's I plodded along from job to job a lot of the times too I never actually took any full time jobs

M Yep so when you say like about teaching always being in the back of your mind. What is your earliest memory of thinking I wouldn't mind being a teacher

S I think high school days. My woodwork teacher in particular or one of them, I had a really bad one in Year 7 and 8 and then 9 and 10 I got this woodwork teacher who was probably pushing retiring age but he was genuine and he treated all the students like he wanted to help them and I thought you know this doesn't seem a bad life, if I could be like him it would be a good career

M Yep I've had a look through your survey and I notice things like you have a good understanding of professional development available to you as a teacher, the stability of the job, so you've obviously thought long and hard about what it would be like as a job

S Yes

M About teaching, so you've given that a lot of thought before you enrolled or just something that you've picked up since you've enrolled

S I think before enrolled in the, like the MDT area or the Design and Technology as its now called, I think there's always an opening for teachers in that area but I think before a teacher can do any teaching subject they need their life skills and hands on experience, well that's my opinion from the teachers I had

M Yep

S Those who had been in the workforce and went into teaching later I think were better teachers in that area well I thought they were anyway. Where they could relate back, you know in the industry this is how we do it, this is what we did and they'd often talk about how they come to, how work experience related back to the teaching in schools

M So when you say you thought about teaching in high school because you had a particularly good teacher, what was is about him that made you think that this is something that you wanted to do

S I think it was the way he treated the kids, that he was genuine, whereas some of the other subjects you get the feeling the teachers were just there for the job and probably for the holidays and even when I was at school and thought oh teaching might be okay I think it was the holidays that probably helped you know, it's a pretty good life, all those holidays but I will admit that has changed

M And I noticed too family and the flexibility of probably because of the holidays you have that time to deal with family to be there to attend to their needs and to support them in their academic pursuits, I noticed you wrote strongly agree for those options on the survey, obviously being able to take your kids to school with you didn't feature highly so your kids are much older

S The youngest is 12 now, just going into high school so I guess coming back to do this B Teach Course it was family lifestyle, I'm still limited

with him as far as time available, away from him because see my wife has a brain injury and so her dealings with the kids is limited she really doesn't cope with children so that's why I've been off for so long but how do I put it, I thought while I'm at school or I'm at Uni doing the course and then the immediate years after the lifestyle around school hours was important

M So you saw that as fitting into the …(inaudible)

S Fitting into high family lifestyle if you like, because initially when I was going to go back to work I thought well I can't go full time because the hours of your know like 7-5 or 6 was too much, I say 7 but usually you've got to be leaving home by that time and I was going to go to TAFE and do drawing or tech drawing or engineering type course and I thought yeah that's okay when I'm at TAFE but then I'm relayed back to industry so does that make sense it is the hours that I'm probably,

M I know what you mean, yeah because of your family needs

S like family needs pushed me into this course in a way but it was always in the back of my mind that if the opportunity come I probably wouldn't mind doing it

M Yep the main focus of our studies is to really think about what image people hold of teachers, how they see themselves in that role down the track, that's the really interesting part about why people are entering these courses, so for you obviously family is a big factor, so the day to day management of doing this as a job is appealing for you, for family reasons

S Yes

M And even though in high school you really took to this MDT teacher that you had and you thought about teaching for yourself with him, how then did you end up going into fitting and machinery

S The apprenticeship, I guess I knew I wanted to do a trade

M Yep

S To do the trade, teaching the trade subjects areas, the trade was a pre-requisite if you like

M So when you went onto your apprenticeship did you think I'll do this because I want to be a teacher or you did it because that was the opportunity and then

S I think the opportunity arose, I was always interested in hands on, the opportunity was there but even when I did my apprenticeship it was still in the back of my mind that down the track after a couple of years I might look at teaching but as you go into work and I actually applied to do the course I think a year after, yeah I'd been out 12 months so

M Oh okay

S I actually applied to come here and then I looked at it and I thought no I have a good job, you're going back on a low wage, no I'll give it a miss for a year or two and then a year rolls into two, three, four, five

M It goes that way, it gets away from you doesn't it

S And then, so I guess I've lost 12 years in my life in a way, no that's not the right word is it, I've had 12 years at home looking after the family which I've lost 12 years in the workforce

M Yep and …(inaudible)

S So it was towards that time, you know what I mean, so I haven't lost that time it's been great, I've probably gained a lot that a lot of fathers

don’t gain but there was 12 years that I just could not think about doing anything full time or I couldn’t commit to anything yeah

M So no that you are in your course and you’re chipping away at that, there’s going to come a time when you are going to be in front of a classroom so how do you envisage yourself doing it, like you’re now a teacher, so how do you envisage yourself

S As in how I feel, or how will I teach

M Well how do you feel and how do you see yourself, what kind of teacher do you think you want to be

S I think I would, my life I’ve probably tried to lead by example, I know it’s going to be frustrating because school is totally different to when I went there but I feel if I can teach a woodwork class or a metal work class and have the pleasure of showing a child how to achieve an operation say on a lathe, they can lathe for example, just show them how to use that lathe and have them machine something

M Yep

S I think if they, if you can gain their interest then I would feel good

M Yep so you find the sharing of knowledge is really rewarding for you

S I think so yes, because I think it’s the skills we’re losing, hands-on skills so that’s probably my priorities to be able to pass on some of those skills and on the other hand too it’s the older, probably some of the younger generation have been able to pick up from the older ones who are going, passing on there, so I’d still have some of those, I’ve seen some of those traditional skills if you like and whilst I’m probably older I’m going in fresh whereas the teachers my age are looking at retiring

M So do you mind me asking how old you are

S I'm 51

M So what do you think is going to be the biggest challenge for you in the classroom

S Behaviour control I think, behaviour management

M And what sort of things do you think are going to be pretty scary

S I find it, personally I probably find it difficult to be working with a child there say and then you're still watching those over there and that's across the board with teachers, just keeping the class occupied whilst you're trying to give one on one to one child

M So it's the actual management of 30 children

S Management, mmm and keeping their interested, being relevant to what they want to know, I must admit I'm still a little lost how I'm going to do that

M How do you feel about your subject area

S I'm confident in the subjects area

M Yep, do you feel that the type of subject that you will be teaching will offset some of those behavioural things

S I would hope so, it's probably because the students are not in a sort of formal classroom structure and if you can give them a project they're interested in which I think is the big challenge then if they're interested, they're going to be keen

M And one of the benefits is that MDT is often run as an elective

S Yes

M So they choose to be there because of interest

S Yes it is or on the other hand you do get those who want to be there as an easy option so

M That's true, true, yeah. So what knowledge and skills do you think are essential for you to be successful in your first few years of beginning to teach

S I think trying to understand how kids think and operate is important

M So being able to relate to them

S Relate to them and I'm probably at an advantage in that way that I have a 12 year old and a 16 year old boy so that, well I can't understand them either but like most parents but I think that is a big advantage and knowing the subject area whilst I may not know from a teaching point of view I know it from a background of life

M And you're confident that that will carry you a fair way

S I would hope so, I might be off track, I might be wrong but I would hope it would, I think knowing and having a, well a love for your subject I think will go a long way

M So just to recap for the questions, so knowledge and skills that you think are going to help you be successful in the classroom is a genuine enthusiasm for your subject yourself, a background of skills so there's this content you're not concerned about having to teach

S Yeah I think that's right

M Yep so you've got your content sort of

S And if you can relate what you're doing in the classroom if the kids say well you know you're going to form an apprenticeship as a carpenter or as a fitter/machinist or a hands on skill down the track if you can relate what you're trying to get to them in the classroom to how they

will need it in industry later on and if you can get them to understand that I think you're a long way there to help them in their work

M Yeah on your survey you indicated things like curriculum, assessment and reporting, parent/teacher interviews, planning/programming, looking after your special needs kids and your gifted and talented students, you indicated that you were a bit concerned about how you would do those

S I am and I guess we'd only just started the course when we did the survey and this reporting and curriculum methods is in a big change at the moment too and I think we're in a limbo stage, that's what I feel

M So is it a lack of guidance in the curriculum that's concerning you

S I guess as we go on we're learning, it will come together, it will be better I hope by this time next year but because the EL's has been sort of bandied around, tossed out and who knows what because I don't think we're getting enough whether the EL's was good or bad I'm not sure but yeah I could see both sides to it but because it's in limbo I don't think we're getting any guidance as to our assessment, how we will assess on our teaching

M They're starting to do it now, yep, they're starting to bring out the new Tasmanian curriculum so you're right it's all changing from the L's to the new Tas curriculum is that, I mean your, you've got two years at Uni is that being dealt with, like is the University preparing you for the changes

S I don't think so personally because we looked in bridging last year we started to look at the EL's and then this year we was told the EL's are out and we don't apply those to any of our planning at this stage but we haven't been given any specifics to replace it, so how we assess, what are we assessing against and that has not come into

any of our training so I mean there's time for it to come here but it's frightening at this stage

M Because of the lack of structure

S I guess so, yeah, what are we, how we plan a lesson but why are we planning that lesson you see unless you're planning it to assess against something you're still lost in how you actually

M Why you're doing it

S What you put in that plan, do you know what I mean

M For sure, yeah

S So no there's not enough, I don't think there's enough come in and whilst it's probably still early days in our two year course we should be having some little bit of an outline of what to expect

M Yep can we talk a bit more about sort of this image that you hold, when you were talking about your Year 10 teacher, so did you have any strong experiences whether they be good or bad through school

S I think in Year 7 I wanted to do woodwork and my older brother was always better than me at everything and that went right back to when we was little kids you know, I mean brought up on a farm he always got to drive the bulldozer but I couldn't you know so that's a typical older brother thing but when I went to school I'd known this one Year 7 teacher he picked on me once, well more than once and he was I'm not sure of the nationality Russian or Czechoslovakian he might have been something and he was often hard to understand and I was probably a little bit slow and he used to say to me your brother does well why don't you do well and that you know used to get me but it was typical if someone, a brother is good or he's in the next lot through the family good, yeah and he would often say that to me, your brother understands it he doesn't oh okay you do it well

M So how does that make you feel as a student in terms of your own learning

S It used to make me think well I'm not my brother and it probably used to make me envious because I was never quite as, what's the word, I won't say good but the end product in my work wasn't to the same standard as to my brother's, it was probably okay but he was that level above and so I was sort of expected to be there too

M So when that teacher put that on you, how did you respond to that, did you try and strive harder or did it make you go the other way

S No I strived harder but I just couldn't achieve it

M Yeah

S I just didn't seem to be able to achieve it and that's, I mean it's human nature, we're all different

M So obviously that's stuck in your mind the way that that teacher related to you as a student, some people will say I want to be a teacher because I never had a good one or they say like I want to be a better teacher than this particular one that upset me but you've indicated although you had that bad experience it was then you then got to see the other side with your teacher in Year 10

S Mm I got a good teacher and I guess I saw the contrast and it's going back a few years now too

M Yeah so when you say then you got a good teacher, what was so good, you've told me about the way you related to the student but

S He, if I was struggling and or any student was struggling with something he took the time to explain how to do it and he also always said why we were doing it, so you could see the big picture and he'd often tell us that when he worked in the joinery shops some of the things that

they had to do and you know I just can't remember now what they were but I remember at the time those stories sounded like, you know that sounds like a good life that that's where he got his learning from because he could then pass on to the students, I'm trying to think of an example. He was making a coffee table and I was struggling with one of the joints together and he come up and I remember he came to me and I can't remember the specifics but like I can remember him coming to me and showing me what I was doing wrong, what it was I forget now, but it was just the way I was going about it whereas in the earlier years if we weren't quite doing it right there was no teaching to show you how to do it right, it was just expected, you know Year 7 and 8 expected to get it and I thought well if I can copy this teacher and pass the knowledge on the same way

M So you've mentioned that you've come from a farm, so your parents were both farmers

S Yes, yes

M How was education sort of promoted or not promoted in your family

S Well we was always expected to learn but I guess being, it was a large family, I'm from one of eight children so I'm third, so a large family and I guess mum had her hands full and dad was just a worker, dad worked all the time, plus we saw a lot of him because when we weren't at school you was expected to be alongside him working. I guess we weren't, there wasn't that higher education level, so we weren't you know what I mean pushed along although dad I think I started Grade 7 at an Area School and dad was sort of weighing up things and he moved to Latrobe actually so we could all get through high school rather than have to bus to an area school

M So your dad sold the farm

S So he actually saw the need for it, yes he sold the farm but stayed on it working for a couple of years before he moved and then he went to work and had a small farm from then on

M So education
S It was important

M Probably the kids education was really important to your dad
S Mm it was important but I'm not sure how much weight that had him moving but from my understanding of a 11 or 12 year old I think that was the main reason

M So do you think that knowing that your parents thought it was important influenced you into becoming like following education as a career
S Well we was always encouraged too, so I think it, it probably did influence me although like typical high school kids rather be home than at school but …(inaudible) wag school or anything like that so yeah it was important and I think it was, yeah I would say a family …(inaudible) influence, encouraged the important although we weren't pushed to go a certain way, does that sort of make sense

M Yeah no it makes perfect sense. Can I just do a little bit of a recap and just make sure I've got it right. So you applied for the teaching course because it's always been in the back of your mind and you had a bad teaching experience in Year 7 but a really positive one in Year 10 and looking at the way that he went about his job you thought that that would be a good job to be in
S I think so and I think at that stage too the holidays looked pretty attractive and they still are I mean you can't deny that fact

M Yeah, yeah so but an opportunity arose to become a fitter and machinist so you did that with it in the back of your mind that that would be a useful experience for when you go to teaching

S Yes

M So in terms of the picture for teaching for yourself, you want to sort of create the same sort of feeling that your Year 10 teacher did, did you sort of see a bit of a role model in terms of you and your teaching image now

S I would think so although it's been a long time ago but those good memories still stand out and I think the important part out of that if I can take it in that I can treat each student as an individual and if they are struggling try and, I guess it's the techniques that we're looking at, give them a technique to do something that is easier and achieves a good outcome

M So what do you hope your students will be saying in twenty years

S I hope they're not, well that's a good question, I hope they say well that teacher taught me something, Mr W helped me with this and I remember how to do that and whether it be in their trade or just something they're doing at home but I would hope that they are doing something hands-on, it will be all worth something

M So the greatest challenge you indicated was behaviour management and being able to give the students, like meet all of the students needs, that was, yeah so that was what you seemed to think you would find quite challenging is getting around everybody and keeping everybody on task

S I think so and I think that's pretty challenging for everybody

M And the things that you indicated about the knowledge and the skills you thought would be essential for you to be successful when you started

teaching, to know your content area, you're comfortable with that, your behaviour management, have some strategies there and have a genuine want to relate to the students like

S I think that's important, ….(inaudible)

M The more …(inaudible) values of teaching rather than the holidays and the pragmatic issues

S Yes I think you're there for the kids and if you're not there for the students well why be there, that's my opinion I mean it might change after I've been there a year or two but

M So is there anything else you'd like to add along those lines

S No I don't think so I think, I'll admit that I probably started this course for if you like selfish reasons but I mean family reasons it's probably not selfish reasons but if we don't have some sort of personal gain out of something well why do it, you know, no matter what it is

M There's two ways to make money isn't there, the hard way or the …(inaudible)

S Yeah and if there's no personal gain you know then there's no point in doing it that if you wish you should be doing the other thing so yeah I'm here and I'm happy so far I'm looking forward to the challenge but it still does worry me how I'm going to keep those kids on task but that will come.

M Very good.